

GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR

# BURMA

2 0 2 3



IDP CHILDREN SING AND DANCE IN KARENNI STATE, BURMA.



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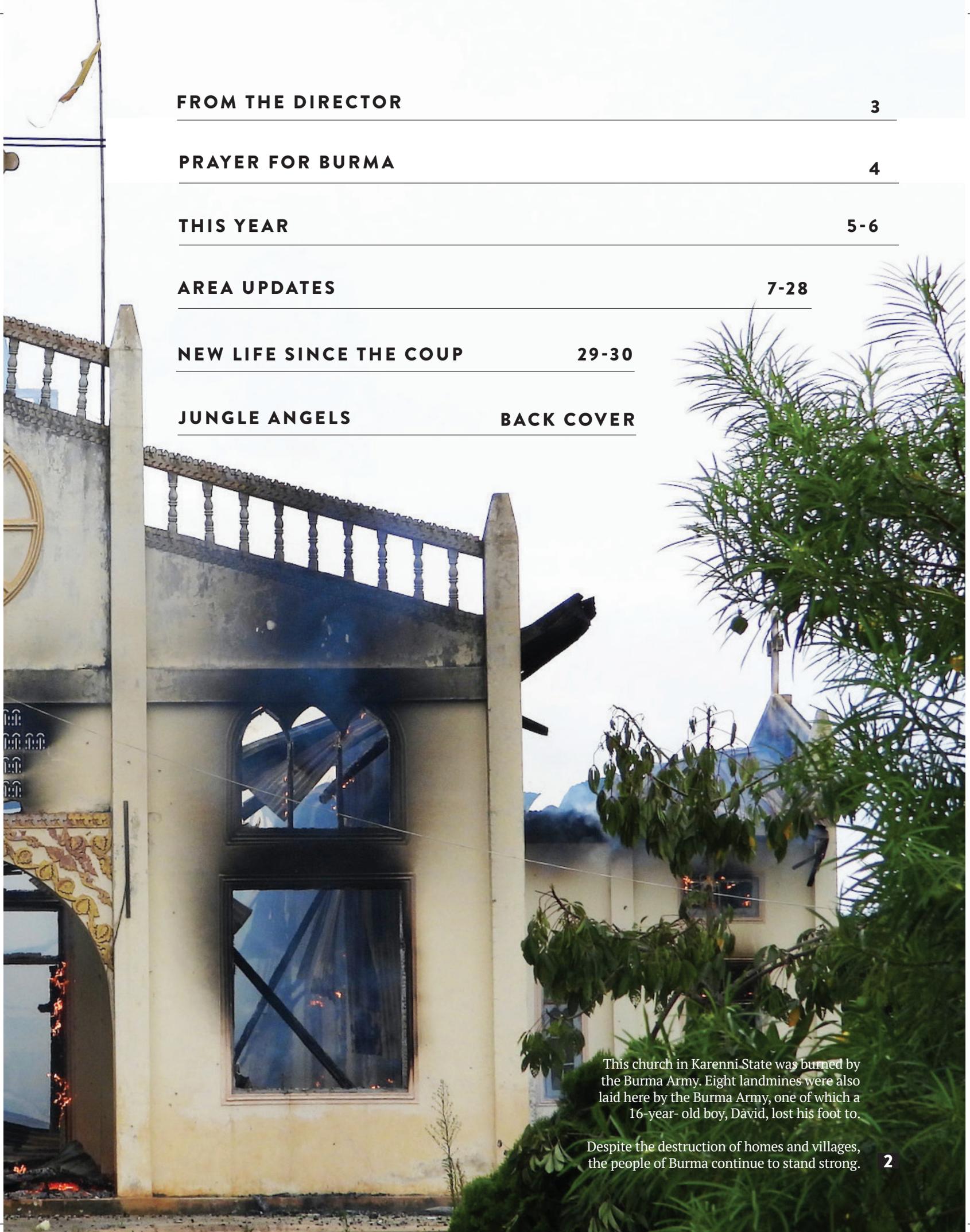
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This church in Karenni State was burned by the Burma Army. Eight landmines were also laid here by the Burma Army, one of which a 16-year-old boy, David, lost his foot to.

Despite the destruction of homes and villages, the people of Burma continue to stand strong.

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FROM THE

# DIRECTOR

"THAT IS WHY GOD  
SENT JESUS: SO  
THAT EVEN WHEN  
WE BREAK, HE  
DOESN'T."

-DAVE EUBANK

## DEAR FRIENDS,

The situation in Burma now is worse than we've ever seen it, and there is the heaviest fighting since World War II. The Burma military comes with a speed and a force that I've never seen before. At the same time, there is a new unity in Burma, against the dictatorship, that cuts across all social, economic, racial, tribal, ideological, and religious lines. This unity is based on people from all over Burma banding together to stand against the oppressive dictatorship. This gives us all hope.

Yet, in the midst of this, we want more than just unity against an evil system of governance and against human rights abuses (murder, rape, burnings, killings and displacement), we want a unity for something: otherwise - even if the dictators fall and there is some form of democracy - there will be no love and without love, democracy is nothing more than two wolves and a sheep voting on what's for dinner. And even with love, if it's just human love, when under enough pressure, it will break.

That is why God sent Jesus: so that even when we break, he doesn't and he helps us. His love is unbreakable. When we turn to him and call on his name and obey him and work with him, he enables us to love even when it seems like there is no love. This is the only hope for any new

**3** change in Burma. This is our prayer. As you read the



stories here, you will read a lot about sorrow and loss. I learned one thing in seminary, the very first day, from my beloved professor, Chuck Kraft: you can live well with sorrow; you can't live well with sin.

Jesus comes to take our sins away. But sorrow we will have, because that is about love. And one of the roles of believers, together, is to share each other's sorrows. A sorrow shared is divided; a joy shared is multiplied. That is how we grow closer together and love each other through everything. I thank God for what the Karen people of Burma call the undiscovered land, the life beyond this one. We all will discover it one day because of the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

Please join us in prayer for a change of heart for the dictators and the Burma Army, for a new government founded in love and forgiveness, and for reconciliation and the building of a new Burma.

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Eubank".

Dave, family, and Christians Concerned for Burma

# PRAYER FOR

# BURMA



## AS YOU READ

through this year's Day of Prayer for Burma, we encourage you to use the individual prayer points placed throughout the publication as a guide and reminder for the different and specific ways to pray for this country.

## A PRAYER FOR BURMA

Heavenly Father, you brought your people out of slavery in Egypt, and protected and provided for them in the desert. Protect Burma's helpless in harm's way. Shelter them from bombs that fall, bullets that fly, and the hands of oppressors. Provide for their needs, especially food, clothing, and medicine. Provide in abundance, and bless those who brave danger to bring help. Where there is fear, bring courage; where there is grief, bring comfort; where there is hatred, bring love and forgiveness. Let the light of Jesus dispel spiritual darkness covering Burma. Let Jesus' love pour from your people there so that hearts will be transformed, and all will be truly alive in Christ. Amen.

## MAJOR PRAYER POINTS

- ▶ For God to **PROTECT** Burma's helpless and shelter them from bombs that fall, bullets that fly, and the hands of oppressors.
- ▶ For God to **PROVIDE** in abundance for their needs, especially food, clothing, and medicine. And pray for God to bless all those who brave danger to bring relief.
- ▶ For God's love to **POUR** from His people there so that hearts will be transformed, and all will be truly alive in Christ.

**THE GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR BURMA HAPPENS EVERY YEAR ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF MARCH. PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR BURMA.**

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# THIS COUNTRY

## THE SPRING REVOLUTION, AND BIRTH OF THE NEW BURMA

BY ASHLEY SOUTH

Following the 1 February 2021 coup, Myanmar is in turmoil. The state is not fragile or failing - it has failed. But a new Burma is emerging. The previous National League for Democracy (NLD)-led government oversaw a failing peace process and stalled political transition. Aung San Suu Kyi and her party were unable or unwilling to change the political narrative in Burma by speaking on behalf of historically marginalised communities such as the Rohingya and other ethnic nationality groups. Nevertheless, the previous government was at least mostly civilian.

Following the NLD's victory in the 2021 elections, the Myanmar Army seized power, destroying the country's nascent democracy. After the coup, huge numbers of people took to the streets to oppose the military takeover through the Civil Disobedience Movement. After the reviled Myanmar Army started killing civilian protesters, many young people fled to areas under the control of Ethnic Armed (or Resistance) Organizations (EAOs), which have long been battling for self-determination.

The 'Spring Revolution' has been extraordinary and inspiring. Ethnic Burman 'Generation Z' youth - many of whom previously had little interest in politics - have joined ethnic activists to oppose the military regime. This period has seen the emergence of new forms of solidarity, and a greater appreciation among urban-based people of the suffering and aspirations of ethnic nationality groups. Among the most important developments has been the formation of People's Defence Forces (PDFs), often supported by key EAOs; some PDFs have allied themselves with the anti-junta National Unity Government.

Some observers expected the PDFs to be quickly defeated by the Myanmar Army. They have however, proved highly resilient, winning significant battlefield victories against the junta forces, often fighting in partnership with EAOs. This resistance is all the more extraordinary given very limited international support to anti-coup forces in Myanmar.



IDP children in Karenni State, Burma.

# YEAR

## OVERVIEW



Protest against military dictatorship in Karen State, Burma, spring 2022.

Since the coup, the illegal and illegitimate junta has killed 2,700 people, including through a total of over 200 airstrikes. The most appalling of these was an attack on Kachin civilians and activists at A Nang Pa Village on 23 October 2022, which killed up to a hundred innocent people. Instability and insecurity will be exacerbated in the future, as other global challenges, such as the hazards of climate change, arise. It seems unlikely that the state of Myanmar will recover, at least for many years or decades. Despite this dire scenario, there are reasons for hope.

In Chin, Kachin, Karenni and Karen areas, EAOs and PDFs have resisted violent incursions by the Myanmar Army, often pushing back the invading forces. This is happening in a context where EAOs such as the Karen National Union and

the Kachin Independence Organization, and state-based bodies such as the Karenni State Consultative Council (in partnership with the Karenni National Progressive Party), have long been providing essential services to conflict-affected ethnic nationality communities. For example, in 2022 an estimated 300,000 children attend some 2,000-plus schools administered by EAOs.

The education and other services provided by EAOs, often in partnership with civil society organizations, can be considered the building blocks of a new type of federalism, built from the bottom up. With the destruction of Myanmar by an illegal and illegitimate military junta, these ethnic homelands are the basis of a new federal union.

Burma Army attack helicopter, strafing.



THAT THE MYANMAR JUNTA WOULD SURRENDER THEIR LIVES TO JESUS CHRIST AND STOP OPPRESSING THE PEOPLE AND COMMITTING EVIL ACTS.

PRAYER  
POINT



# CENTRAL BURMA



Credit: The New York Times: Protesters in Yangon, central Burma.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS DANGEROUS: NOTES FROM THE FIELD IN POST COUP MYANMAR

BY \*WAN LEE, AID WORKER IN CENTRAL BURMA

*\*Names changed for security purposes.*

"We are thinking what difficult issues we are now facing (in Yangon slum areas). We would like to talk about the below information, about communities who are now struggling to survive every day. These are some of the issues we face:

Mental health problems, suicide, unemployment, government involvement/pressure, corruption, unexpected interruption, commodity price rise, inflation, less payment for wage workers / less job opportunities, no education opportunities, no good clinic (because of security problems, less doctors, expensive), no freedom of expression.

Currently, we can say all people are now feeling depression, anxiety and especially feel hopeless because of

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our country's security and economic situation. All are now

under pressure and suffocated. Suicide cases are rising. Authorities people are now becoming bullies. There is violence and robberies. The main concern we are now facing is insecurity. Even if we are robbed, there is no one who will take action, police are useless. We need to be very careful whatever we do such as taking a taxi, buying things, contributing emergency food, visiting homes for data assessment and health. When we do this kind of activity, sometimes unexpected government involvement can cause interruption.

People, especially vulnerable/poor families, are struggling to get proper jobs as there are less job opportunities than ever and most of the big companies are now leaving our country. Unemployment rate is higher than before. In addition, the inflation rate is surprisingly the highest (triple than last year). That's why commodity prices and

everything is very expensive. People's salaries have not changed.

Regarding health, this is also the worst situation. After the coup, there is no reliable clinic, fewer doctors. When we help ill people going to the hospital and trying to find doctors and good treatment is a lot harder than before. Corruption is now everywhere, we need pay to do everything. Lower and middle class people are now struggling more than ever. Rich people can only survive well here. We want to say more directly but we cannot. Thank you."

## SPARKS OF UNITY

BY ADAM WALLIS

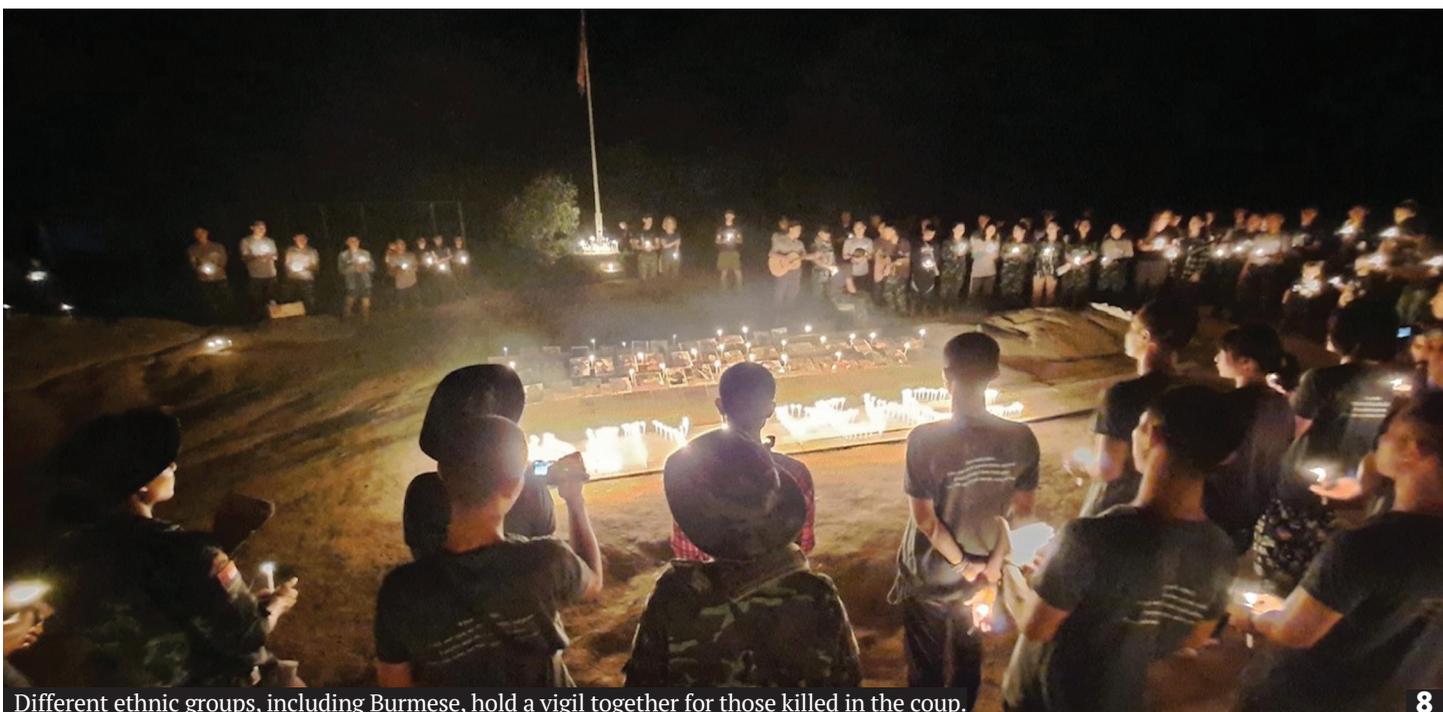
"It's hard to trust them and work with them, they (ethnic Burmese fighting the junta) have only been fighting for three months and are now asking us to partner with them. They want us to risk our lives for them. We have been fighting for 70 years; they won't stand." These words were passionately spoken by a young Karen man regarding the attempts of ethnic Burmese to partner with the ethnic minority states in fighting the military dictatorship in April 2021. This was a commonly-held stance at the start of the coup but as the conflict has moved towards its second year, perspectives are shifting.

Before February 1, 2021, trust between the ethnic groups of Burma and the Burmese people was rare. The Burmese military had instituted a habitual practice of persecuting the ethnic minority states of Burma for over 70 years. Those living in developed central Burma knew little of the atrocities being committed in the ethnic areas due to the military's control over media outlets and internet. February 1, 2021, marked the date that those living in

central Burma began to experience those same atrocities as their government turned on them. A young man from Yangon is currently fighting and working with the Karenni National Defense Organization. He told this story: "I grew up in Yangon and knew nothing of what was happening to the ethnic people. We just heard there was fighting out in the country between terrorists and the government. When I was younger, very little outside news came to us because everything was very controlled. My brother brought home the 2008 Rambo movie one day, it was banned by the government in Burma. We closed all the doors and blocked all the windows before we watched it so that no one would know. During the scene where the soldiers were forcing villagers to run through a rice field filled with land mines, my brother said, 'That's Burma Army!' I thought, what?! I thought the soldiers in the movie were terrorists! This was the first time I learned about what the government was doing to them."

This young man is now working with the Karenni National Defense Organization (KNDO) and has served alongside many of the different ethnic groups in both a military and humanitarian capacity. During his short time amongst the ethnic people of Burma, he has risked his life to serve and protect them. He has been adopted by those who, prior to February 1, 2021, most likely would never have allowed him into their lives.

A Karen medic who has spent his life as part of the resistance and has treated many villagers wounded by the Burmese military said, "If the ethnic Burmans are willing to submit to our authority then it is ok for them to join our organizations and work with us." This same medic's life was saved by Burmese-trained doctors after he was shot while treating wounded resistance fighters on the frontline. He now works alongside one of these doctors at his clinic.



Different ethnic groups, including Burmese, hold a vigil together for those killed in the coup.



A Karenni soldier on the front lines, outside of Loikaw, Karenni State.

A group of ethnic Burmese teachers left their lives in central Burma and moved to northern Karenni State. They didn't agree with the military's actions and chose to protest; they found that their calling to resist led them to leave the junta's system and pour into the areas oppressed by it. They established a school in a Karenni National Defense Force-controlled area providing free education to villagers and IDPs. They said, "Some are fighting in the jungle and in the cities. Others are organizing a new government. We are educators. When the Burmese come they attack the civilians and force them to flee their homes. Schools no longer meet and children are without education. We hope to fix this problem that the junta is causing by serving the families affected." The local Karenni community supports them with food, housing and love.

Love and sacrifice have built a foundation of trust amongst many of the ethnic minority groups and the ethnic Burmese resisting the junta. This conflict has healed old wounds in some instances and created new families in others, making the country more unified than ever before. Both Burmese and ethnic minority groups have laid down their lives for the joint cause of freedom. These examples of individuals could be replicated at a national level; however, it will take love, trust, reconciliation, and sacrifice. The unity from these new relationships will continue on, providing an example for leaders to follow as Burma moves beyond this current conflict.

**9** "We need to unite to win. We have been fighting for

70 years but haven't seen much change. There is more change now that the Burmese are fighting alongside us. They are fighting against their own government and I respect that. They are also dying on the front lines for the people," a young Karen man said in November 2022.

To know someone will stay and die by your side when they could have run is a divine thing. Love overcomes self-preservation. Trust thrives in this environment and it grows and blossoms freely, spreading like wildfire. As trust and unity grow so does the chance for freedom.

"For the greatest love of all is a love that sacrifices all. And this great love is demonstrated when a person sacrifices his life for his friends." John 15:13 TPT

## THE GOD WHO SAVES

### BY \*LOGAN MOON

*\*Names changed for security purposes.*

Crouching in the bushes by his apartment, Logan desperately phoned an FBR contact he had and asked for help to escape out of the city from where the Burma Army was hunting him. Logan, like many outspoken public figures in central Burma, had made it to the top of the military's hit list and they were now getting closer to finding him.

Fast forward six months: Logan now resides as a political

refugee in the United States, where he shares his story of the escape and how, more than anything, it was God who was the one to pursue and save him from the hands of his enemies.

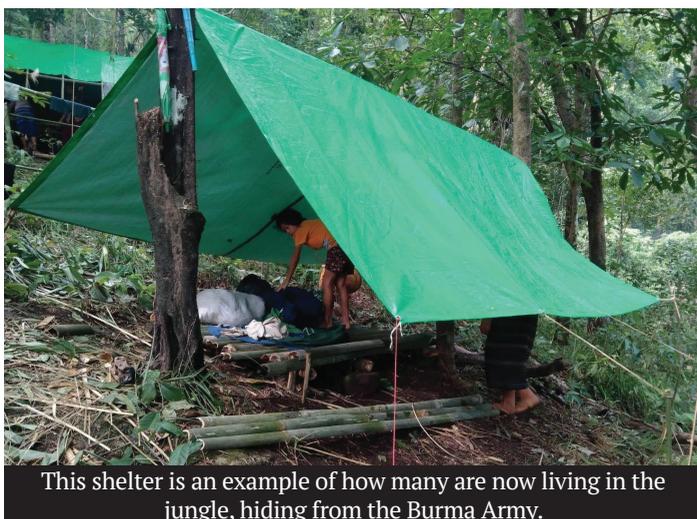
“When I called that time, it was the middle of the night so I think he [David Eubank] was probably sleeping. I sent a voice message to him and in the early morning he called me right back. He said, ‘Logan, I’m in the jungle and I cannot rescue you at this moment, but God, He can save you.’ I don’t quite understand what he’s saying, but he prayed for me through the phone.

“You know, I had no one, but someone I had never met in person before, he is praying for me. It made me so secure. And finally I arrive in the jungle. And you know, my life before is luxury and celebrities, but now when I arrive in the jungle, I have to sleep on the mat and I was so frustrated and angry. I didn’t know what to do. I can’t sleep at night.

“I went to Dave and said to him, ‘I can’t handle this. I can’t manage to sleep because there’s panic inside my heart. My anger, my frustration, I want to kill them. The Burmese military keeps killing innocent civilians, I have no more patience.’ I asked, ‘How can I do this? How can I be free from all of this pain?’ Dave said, ‘We can’t do it ourselves, because we are just humans. We have to ask God.’ And so... I tried.

“At night after 8pm we don’t have electricity in the jungle, so I went out and knelt down and looked up at the sky. I don’t know who is the God who Dave keeps telling me to ask and to pray to. But I prayed, ‘I don’t know who you are God, but if you really exist, please help me.’ I didn’t address all of my problems to God, I just kept saying ‘Help me, help me.’ I kept praying this as I knelt down in the jungle. As I pray, suddenly something is pulling all the things inside of me out. I don’t know how to explain, but... I could finally manage to sleep. This is amazing. At that time, I don’t know who is Jesus. I don’t know the Bible. I had never read it. But, He was still so kind to me. He saved not only my life, but rescued me from the difficulties I was facing.

“You know, this was a very life changing experience. I had



never been through anything like this. It is difficult to accept and explain it, but He helped me. So, I have started to believe He has a plan for me. Not only for me, but for all of us. I don’t know personally all who helped me to get out from Burma to here, but God brought me here. And now I am doing the positive impact things for my people and my country to win the revolution. Now I have started reading



the Bible. "I am trying to get closer with Him. Whenever I arrive at a critical moment, I ask, ‘who is Jesus?’ I look at the sky. I don’t know if he [Jesus] is tall or if he is short or what color he is, I have no idea. But He is here, I believe this. He is everything. So thank you, David, for bringing me to this God you used to tell me about. At the very first moment I did not understand, but now I see.”

Logan finishes sharing his story by asking the group, “So can we pray together? Not for me, I have a connection with Him, but for my people and for my country. Yes, let’s pray together.” In the same way, we urge readers across the world to pray for the people of Burma, and for people like Logan, that they would come to know the one true God who sees them, loves them, and saves them through Jesus.

**"I DON'T KNOW IF HE [JESUS] IS TALL OR IF HE IS SHORT OR WHAT COLOR HE IS, I HAVE NO IDEA. BUT HE IS HERE..."**

-LOGAN

**PRAYER POINT**

THAT THE PEOPLE OF BURMA WOULD SEE THEIR DIFFERENCES AS A STRENGTH AND UNITE IN LOVE AND NOT OUT OF HATE FOR THE MYANMAR JUNTA.

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# EASTERN BURMA

## KAREN STATE



## MACHINE GUNS, A WIDOW, AND A CHANGED HEART

BY KAREN EUBANK

Back in 2021, a woman came to us after a Good Life Club (GLC) program in Karen State to tell us her story. That morning, as she had tried to plant rice at her farm, the Burma Army had fired machine guns at her and she had barely escaped with her life. “Bullets were hitting the flooded paddy all around me, less than a foot on each side of me, as I ran for my life into the jungle.” She told us she was a widow with five kids and might need help to buy rice because she had given up trying to plant her own. Her name was Naw Thraw Gay and she was a strong lady, a vivacious spirit, and occasionally laughed while sharing her impossible situation.

We gave her some money to buy rice, but then Dave asked, “What if we helped you? What if our team tried to plant with you?”

She laughed and said it was impossible and all her resolve was gone to go back there again. Dave said, “What if you just show us your field? You don’t have to go – and we

can try something. Maybe we’ll get nowhere, but we can try. We’d like to help you by trying.” She shook her head, meaning ‘impossible,’ but



Planting rice by crawling to avoid Burma Army fire.

agreed to show us the field.

We followed her to her rice field, walking the line of laying our lives down but, despite the uncertainty, it felt good and right and true for us. I prayed that God would give us all his

Psalm 91 covering, that her planting and harvesting would be fruitful and that in some way we could be God’s instruments of change in the present reality.

Dave and a few of the team ventured into the field to start planting and, within minutes, a volley of gunfire poured from the mountain, bullets peppering all around us.

The team made their way back, all unhurt. Our new friend laughed, “I told you so!” I couldn’t believe that the Burma Army aggression towards the farmers was so intense and directed. Imagine living in a house within range of arbitrary gunfire. We prayed that the Burma Army there would change their hearts or fall. It was a pretty despairing moment realizing that this was her life - with children. Yet I was thankful we were given the opportunity to step into Naw Thraw Gay’s life, to share the peril she faces, and to be an eyewitness to her life in the “valley of the shadow of death.” I prayed that Psalm 23 would truly be a

peaceful reality in her lifetime.

Seven months later, in 2022, we returned and found friends, changed hearts and...rice! By God's help and with courage, our widow friend, Naw Thraw Gay, and her neighbors, the Karen villagers, were able to go out to their fields at night and plant the rice with no lights and were not seen or shot at by the Burma Army. All the rice was planted and this is thanks to God and all of you who prayed for this widow. Now, the rice has been harvested. Three of the soldiers who had been shooting at her deserted the Burma Army and have asked forgiveness. Reconciliation has happened with those who were once enemies and have now become friends.

## OUT OF THE ASHES COMES NEW LIFE:

### A PATIENT STORY FROM A COUNTRY ON FIRE

BY DR. MATT SPREADBURY

Burma has been a country on fire for the last seventy-five years; however, over this past year, more eyes have been opened to the reality that Burma's own military is the arsonist behind the fire - both figuratively and literally. Local sources report that, as of July 2022, the Burma Army had burned down 11,000 homes since the coup of February 1, 2021, leaving countless civilian lives upended and in ashes.

One place of refuge from Burma Army attacks has been the Free Burma Rangers' (FBR) Jungle School of Medicine-Kawthoolei (JSMK), in Karen State, Burma. An international surgeon who volunteered in early 2022 was able to witness and play a pivotal role in a unique patient case during his time at JSMK. Here he shares his story of Naw Day Mu:

As the indiscriminate bombs fell from the jets on her village, I imagined her and her husband clinging to their two adorable, playful daughters as their bamboo house erupted in flames. The next few moments must have been a blur: the house collapsing, metal and debris flying through the air. Shock, confusion, and pain must have been felt as the bombing continued. Naw Day Mu's parents in the house next door were killed by a Burma Army bomb dropped on their house. Metal shrapnel fragments from the bomb reached Naw Day Mu and tore through her body.



Naw Day Mu at JSMK



Naw Day Mu's home: reduced to ash by the Burma Army; her parents were killed in this same attack.

Three days later Naw Day Mu was carried into JSMK on a "bambulance": a hammock strung across a bamboo pole for people to carry the ill and wounded through mountainous terrain. She had a fever and an infection raging through her body. The shrapnel had entered her lower back by her spine and right buttock. In the operating room, Naw Day Mu began screaming out of fear and pain. She had not reached post-traumatic stress disorder yet but was still experiencing acute stress after the horrific trauma of the past few days. After the technical and successful operation was over, the Karen medics tended to Naw Day Mu's wounds and we debrided them every few days. Gradually over the weeks, Naw Day Mu gained strength and her wounds slowly started to heal. We clapped and shouted out praise as we watched the fierce independence in her progress of rehabilitation when she finally stood on her own again. But, there was even more to be praised shortly after.

Before the prescribed morning physical training routine, someone noticed that Naw Day Mu had been vomiting regularly. I originally thought it was due to her morning dose of antibiotics, but an astute nurse said, "Guys, come on, she is obviously pregnant." *Not a chance*, I thought. A fetus couldn't survive that bombing attack. I humbled myself and on the patchy ultrasound screen I saw with my own eyes a small heartbeat in Naw Day Mu's womb. Her little baby had survived a bombing attack from the Burma Army.

All glory be to Christ. How beautiful life is as it withstands so much oppression. How a light shining in the darkness cannot be overcome. The heart-breaking numbers of civilian deaths are only but a single metric in measuring what is taking place across Burma. Innocent lives are being extinguished by the hands of the Burma Army, like Naw Day Mu's parents, and yet, the rebellious miracle of new life cannot be stopped. Like the baby Naw Day Mu now carries, a small flame of hope for a brighter future in Burma burns on.

PRAYER  
POINT ▶

THAT THE PEOPLE OF  
KAREN STATE WOULD  
SEE, EACH MORNING,  
NEW LIFE, AND HARVEST  
AS A GIFT FROM GOD  
WHO LOVES AND  
CHERISHES THEM.

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# EASTERN BURMA

## KARENNI STATE

### “FIGHTING FOR A FUTURE THAT SEEMS LOST”

DESPITE MANY LOSSES, THE  
KARENNI DO NOT GIVE UP

BY MICHELLE LUCKES

Ghost towns and empty villages spread across Karenni State as more than half the population now has fled from Burma Army attacks and are living as Internally Displaced People (IDPs). Civil service providers, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, and aid workers have been displaced, along with the general population.

Services that used to be offered by the Burma government have largely been shut down by the ongoing national strike. Many government functions are now operated by the Karenni National Progressive Party, which has for years provided schools, policing, and medical care but has faced many challenges due to the ongoing attacks of the Burma Army.

The Burma Army's attacks cause the displaced people to move constantly, making it difficult to administer services such as food distribution, health care, and temporary schools. The onset of the rainy season in May exacerbated the health crisis, as it caused spikes in diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and influenza. Some health centers have been established for IDPs by health care workers fleeing from Yangon and other cities, but bombings cause them to relocate regularly. There is no consistent long-term medical care for the displaced population. Local relief teams stabilize front-line wounded, help IDPs relocate to areas of greater safety, and provide mobile treatment points and medications to the IDP population.

In addition to ground attacks supported by artillery and rockets, the Burma military also uses Russian Hind-type attack helicopters, from which they fire rockets and machine guns, and jet fighters that bomb the Karenni. The resistance in the state is comprised of over 12,000 people. This includes the Karenni Army, the Karenni National Defense Force (KNDF), and the People's Defense Force (PDF). PDF is a nation-wide resistance group that was formed shortly after the coup. Troop strength ranges between 400 and 500 men per battalion, but only 20-25% have modern weapons. Many of the volunteer battalions are aligned with the National



KNDF soldiers stand next to a 500 lb. bomb dropped by Burma Army aircraft in a church and school compound.  
Photo credit: KNDF



**13** Ranger distributes rice to IDPs in Khout Ton Village.

Unity Government and coordinate closely with the Karenni Army and KNDF. All of these battalions are highly motivated but very under-armed. Young people across Karenni State have fled from universities and jobs and are now standing in as IDP camp leaders, PDF commanders, and relief workers.

Local relief teams in Karenni State have been responding to the increased attacks of the Burma Army since the coup of 1 February 2021, helping families flee, providing medical care, and sharing hope through Good Life Club programs. Thank you for praying for the Karenni people and for hearts to change within the regime, in Jesus' name.



IDP children eating lunch provided by a relief team.

## A VOICE FROM KARENNI

**“WE NEED ENCOURAGEMENT. WE HAVE LOST FAMILY. WE HAVE LOST FRIENDS. WE HAVE LOST OUR HOMES. WE ARE FLEEING. THE YOUNG PEOPLE FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM HAVE LOST THEIR FRIENDS, AND THEIR FAMILIES AND ARE FIGHTING FOR A FUTURE THAT SEEMS LOST. WE HAVE LOST OUR HEARTS. WE HAVE LOST MANY THINGS. WE WANT TO REBUILD ALL THAT WE LOST TO BE BETTER. WE WANT TO BUILD A BETTER EDUCATION SYSTEM FOR OUR CHILDREN AND A HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FOR ALL. WE HAVE TO FIGHT FOR AND ESTABLISH A BETTER GOVERNMENT, A FEDERAL DEMOCRACY.”**

– MEDIC IN KARENNI STATE

## NEW LEGS AND THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

BY DS

Jue Aung sat off by himself. There were five other men who all gave polite smiles when I greeted them, but not Jue Aung. Jue Aung is missing half of his left leg; it was blown off by a landmine on 10 February 2022. He, and the five other Karenni men who suffered similar injuries, now sit and wait for their stumps to heal well enough to have prosthetics fitted. Jue Aung, Francis, Michael, Day Reh Htoo, Aung Thaung and Aung Thu are six young men whose lives have been forever changed by their fight for freedom.

I was there the morning of 10 February. Francis, who used to be a fireman before the coup, now is a soldier in the Karenni National Defense Force (KNDF) Battalion 1. It was around 9:30 a.m. when Francis stepped on a Burma Army landmine. The FBR team there evacuated him under fire and FBR medics treated him and saved his life. He lost his right leg just below the knee. He is 26 years old. Not long

after Francis stepped on a landmine, Michael, a 23-year-old soldier in a different part of Demoso, came under heavy mortar fire. One mortar landed beside Michael and the shrapnel sliced his left leg off and mangled his right leg. His left leg is now gone from the mid-thigh down.

18-year-old Jue Aung was a high school student before the coup but as the military took over, he wanted to do something to stand against the dictators and fight for freedom in his land. He joined the KNDF and chose to be a medic; he got a few weeks of training before going to the front line. That morning he ran in to help Michael as the bullets



Amputees celebrate their new legs. Photo credit: Karen National Union

PRAYER  
POINT ▶

THAT GOD WOULD ANSWER THE PRAYERS OF THE KARENNI PEOPLE FOR A CEASE TO THE FIGHTING, HEALING FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD A FUTURE FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

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were flying and Michael was at risk of bleeding out. As he made his way through the hail of bullets, he, too, stepped on a hidden Burma Army mine, becoming a casualty himself.

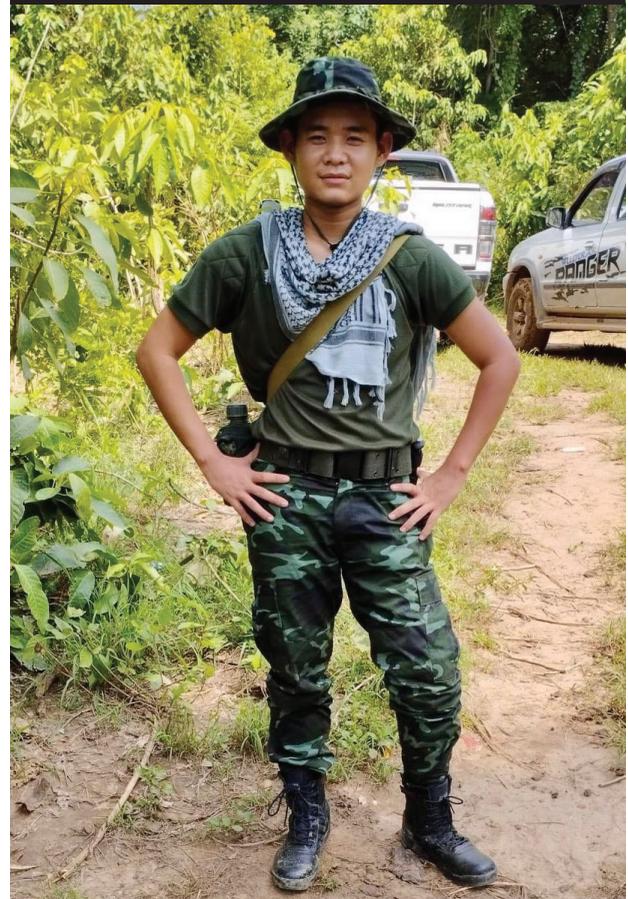
Aung Thaung, the oldest of this group of amputees, is 30 years old. Last year, the Burma Army came and ambushed his KNDF camp, forcing them to temporarily flee. When they regrouped, they pushed the Burma Army back but Aung Thaung soon found out that the Burma Army had laid mines all around their camp. He stepped on one and lost his foot.

Day Reh Htoo is 21 years old and used to be a farmer. He lived outside of Loikaw and helped his father grow rice. When his family was forced to flee, and his rice field became the trenches and bunkers of the front line, he, too, joined the resistance, trying to fight back so he could get his land back. "I just want a simple life," he told me. On 21 February 2022, he was assaulting a Burma Army camp only a few minutes' drive from his home; there he stepped on a landmine and lost his right leg just below the knee.

Finally, there is Aung Thu, who has a wonderful toothy smile that he has no business sharing as often as he does, considering his left leg is missing from below his knee. He was holding the front line outside of Loikaw when a Burma Army mortar landed near him. He had been sitting with his friend when the Burma Army started mortaring them. His friend was killed by the shrapnel, and Aung Thu lost his leg. "I only wish I could have saved my friend," he says.

The story of these six is sadly a common one in Karenni State. These young people have given their limbs and lives out of desperation for freedom, and thousands more continue to take the same risks every day. Francis said to me, "I was doing my duty that morning. I didn't want to lose my leg, but I knew it was a possibility... when I heal, I will go back to my battalion and keep fighting the Burma Army." Jue Aung had the same mindset. Not long after receiving his new leg, Jue Aung exclaimed proudly to me, "I am a soldier again!"

Jue Aung stands proudly without any aid - ready to return to the front line.



I am going home! I will go back to the front line."

These six men are heroes. Their lives will never be the same again, but their hope for freedom was not lost when their legs were. They want to go back and keep helping their people. They want to get rid of the Burma Army and the dictators. They want freedom, and have paid a heavy price for it.

KNDF soldiers who have lost limbs fighting for freedom, and who FBR has helped get treatment.



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# PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR IN KARENNI

BY KAREN EUBANK

On 13 June 2022, we launched our first Karenni Good Life Club (GLC) program of this mission, among new Karen, Karenni, Wa, Shan, Pa-Oh, Arakan, Mon, Padaung, and Burmese rangers. Heavy mortaring in the area from which the villagers had fled eight months before could be heard in the pre-dawn hours and then sporadically up to the time we arrived at the IDP camp.

When Dave met with the camp leaders about a program with the children they were resistant, not wanting to have any large group activity that could be seen by a drone and become a target for an attack. He agreed we'd just visit house to house in small groups.

When our team arrived at the site, a beautiful pine-covered mountainside, the kids were already waiting and parents were nervous but willing to visit outside. Actually, our team was a bit nervous as well, feeling the proximity of the Burma Army and uncertainty of the situation. I suggested we get started right away while it was quiet and peaceful, not knowing how long it would last, and the team dutifully jumped into the program.

I opened with prayer, and, as we shared dances, skits and songs, the tension melted into warm smiles and gratitude for a reprieve from the oppression of worry as entertainment and encouragement provided a salve to the ache of anxiety.

In God's amazing equation of love, the villagers' joy multiplied our team's exuberance. The team was comical, animated, and engaged while the kids and adults were howling with laughter (someday I'll understand the Burmese language and enjoy to the same extent). At the end, the adults were so active in their games it looked like someone might get hurt. We finished with open-mic songs and dances from both our team and the villagers. Walking back to our trucks, several of the team, in surprised voices, told me,

Forgetting war and experiencing love.



"This is so great! I love making people happy. Everyone started off so afraid and we helped them laugh a lot. They asked us if we were tired and I said 'I will never be tired of making you happy.'"

It really seemed that we viscerally felt God's perfect love casting out fear. I thank God for His presence – for both our team and the IDP families – adding so much more to the program and day than any could have expected.



The villagers' homes burned by the Burma Army.

## A PRAYER FOR THE CHILDREN IN KARENNI

BY EVELYN, KARENNI STATE PARLIAMENT

An 8-year-old boy gives water and chews rice to feed his 6-month-old sister, saving her life after their parents died from an artillery shell that hit them on 23 October 2022. This boy becomes the father of his little sister. On the same day, a 10-year-old boy was shot to death by the Burma Army. On November 15th, a 9-year-old girl was killed by an artillery shell. In your great mercy, Lord, we pray for the children, who we are saddened for, by the violent deaths and wounds in Karenni State and all of Burma. Keep all the dead children in heaven and give them the real peace that they have never had. Strengthen the children to be able to overcome the loss of their parents. Guide them to find ways to escape from the violent attacks. Change the heart of the Burma Army to stop the brutal killing of children. We ask you this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

THAT THE CHILDREN OF KARENNI AND ALL OF BURMA WOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED: "FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE." MARK 10:14

PRAYER POINT ▶



Karenni soldiers protecting their home in Karenni State, Burma.

## HOPE IN PAINTED CLOUDS

### A SERVANT-LEADER ON THE KARENNI FRONT

BY ADAM WALLIS

It's warmer this morning, perhaps because of the rain last night. Light bleeds across the sky, painting its cloud towers in preternatural hues. A voice blends with the stillness of the early morning hours: "The clouds, they are like the zoo. You can see any animal you wish in them." Strange words to hear from a battalion commander on any battlefield, but fitting coming from the man standing next to me.

Albert is not like most military commanders. In fact, before the coup, he wasn't one. At first glance, you might pass him by, but more than a cursory observation reveals that there is something special about this man. You cannot help but be charmed by his ever-ready smile, gentle demeanor, and humility.

Born to a farming family in a village nestled at the base of the mountains west of Loikaw, Karenni State, Albert soon realized his passions lay elsewhere. Like many young men and women seeking their calling, he left home. His professional pursuits included priestly studies with the local Roman Catholic church, a supermarket employee in Singapore, a 7-11 clerk in Dubai and a Migration Education and Trafficking Awareness educator with an International non-government organization (NGO) based in

Yangon. He found satisfaction working in the NGO world but, with the advent of the coup, he answered the call to defend his homeland and returned to his village. Once there, he was commissioned as battalion commander within the Karenni National Defense Forces (KNDF).

You quickly learn that his personal desires are secondary to duty and the needs of his men. One desire, the well-being of his men, goes beyond their tactical readiness. He encourages them to pick up trash around their positions by first doing it himself. "You cannot expect them to do, if you will not..." he says and goes on to state matter-of-factly that it is important for not only the environment but our own well-being to keep our area clean. He is accused of being too soft by his peers, but the symptoms of weak leadership are not noticeable in his command. His soldiers obey his orders quickly and show him respect. His leadership style appears that of a wise older brother amongst his younger siblings: loving, but stern.

"The other night the soldiers [stationed in the forward observation post] said they wanted to come back because of the rain and they were very cold. But I told them, 'No, it is your duty, you have

to stay.'" He said this while cooking breakfast with the same soldiers recently returned from their forward position. They were wet and tired but in good spirits.

He has concerns regarding the outcome of this conflict. He says regretfully, "The villagers provide us with food, but we do not like being a burden to them." Then he continues with a smile, "We do not have enough guns or ammunition and we do not have training like the Burma Army. But we have heart and we will fight to the end." He went on to say, "90 percent of villagers are behind us. They've told us even if our homes are burned, don't give up." He says to me, "The Bible says to focus on today; tomorrow has enough problems of its own," then adds, "but it is hard not to worry."

So his hope remains, and stands the test of sniper fire, mortar attacks, and possible invasion at any moment. That hope is instilled in his soldiers. They man improvised fighting positions, standing between overwhelming military might and their families. Amidst the continual threat of overwhelming military power, a small band of civilian volunteers stand their ground. And as David prevailed against Goliath, there is hope.

# FORCE MULTIPLIER

## THE NEXT GENERATION

BY JESSE CUSIC



Eliya is a force. He's a force that is full of joy, is committed, and serves God and his people. He is the chief medic for the Free Burma Rangers (FBR) and was the first ranger to work with Dave Eubank, 25 years ago. Together they went on the first FBR mission, providing help, hope, and love for many IDPs, which eventually turned into the launching point of a movement across the globe, inspiring others to join in helping free the oppressed, including Eliya's own children.

March 2022: thirteen months after the coup, fighting has increased all over the country, and villager displacement is widespread. Information arrives that there are 500 new IDPs close to Eliya's home along the border. We quickly assemble a team and Poe Du jumps into action to help organize all the materials for our trip. He is also Eliya's oldest child.

As we began making a plan to go to the IDPs we quickly learned that due to Eliya and his wife's prior commitments, they would be sending us with their four kids. Poe Du is the oldest and works with FBR in the supply department as well as doing many solar power system installations. Thomas is the second oldest and is now finishing university with a degree in sports education. Eubank Sam, Eliya's only

daughter, is currently in nursing school. Little Allen, Eliya's youngest, is in high school. Our mission would be in their hands.

After a long and difficult off-road drive we got to a checkpoint and we had to get permission from the higher authorities to get access to the IDPs. Thomas and Poe Du jumped out of the cars and began talking and laughing with the authorities – like what I had seen their father do so many times before. They not only got us access but they worked like a team, sharing responsibilities and dividing up duties. All four of them showed how much they cared about these IDPs hiding in the jungle - a care that undoubtedly came from watching their parents care for these people over the years. The four of them shared about God's love, sang songs, played games with and gave gifts to the kids, and distributed aid and gifts to the families.

It is genuinely fulfilling to see the next generation take the reins and follow in their parents' footsteps. I am sure that Eliya and Cat are proud of their four children and what they are able to accomplish as a team. They are the next generation of leaders and an unstoppable force.

*Eliya's children left to right: Thomas, Poe Du, Eubank Sam, and Allen sit in front of a group of IDPs after the GLC program.*



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# EASTERN BURMA

## SHAN STATE

## DIFFICULTIES MOUNT AS DISPLACEMENT HEIGHTENS

BY NU, SHAN RELIEF WORKER



Nu interviews IDPs about why they were forced to flee.

**"... AND HE [GOD] OPENED THE WAY  
FOR US TO GO IN AND HELP THE  
SHAN PEOPLE, AND COME OUT AND  
TELL THEIR STORIES."**

- NU'S SHAN COWORKER



19 Shan IDP students completing a school assignment.

Heavy fighting this year in the northern Karenni cities of Pekon, MoBye, and Demoso caused thousands to flee across the border into Shan State. Shan State, Burma, is often designated by the north and south regions and is the country's largest ethnic state. These newly-displaced families joined the growing population of 1.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs) within Burma. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates there are now over 50,000 IDPs in southern Shan State alone.

Nu, a Shan relief team member, describes their visit to these people: "It was difficult to encounter the newly displaced; their sadness and loss were visible in their eyes." For some, the trauma of displacement and the encounters with the Burma Army continue to affect their daily lives. Visibly anxious villagers asked medics for medicine for their "heart palpitations," a sign of severe anxiety, and were at times even afraid to interview with the relief team, thinking their information might get into the hands of the Burma Army. As Nu completed interviews, she noticed that most villagers expressed fear when recounting their experiences. A woman named Nang Hsa can't stand the sound of loud noises and has to fight the urge to flee to escape the sound. She had fled her village when a bomb exploded next to her house. Her grandson was only 16 days old. After a traumatic 19-day journey, they finally arrived at the IDP camp. Almost all interviews began with smiles that quickly faded to solemn expressions and tears. When speaking with them it was difficult for Nu not to cry with them.

In total, the Shan relief team engaged with over 2,000 IDPs in four different camps during the June relief mission. The teams provided them with food, medical relief, school supplies, and other support and encouragement through Good Life Club (GLC) programs. The team first visited a Buddhist temple on the southern Shan border that was housing 660 families who arrived just a month earlier. The team then went on to visit three other IDP camps in Shan State that were formed a year prior when fighting in northern Shan State intensified and the ranger teams had

been in contact with them since their creation. One of the camps had poor sanitation and was difficult for farming. The team is planning to improve sanitation on their next mission. Those living as displaced people are often pulled between two things: the desire and belief that one day they will return home, and the reality of needing to live in an environment that is not their home. When asked about returning home, a young Shan IDP shared, "Now nobody can go back to the village because lately one IDP went back then got shot by the [Burma] army and died."

Nu says, "they miss their home but don't want to build a new home. They can't [return] so instead they invest in temporary things so they can survive the wait..."

Nu is also very concerned with the education system she has seen in the camps. It is supported solely by the villagers and small local entities. The students in this area are not

leaving their families in the camp.

As the team's time with the IDPs came to an end, Nu recounts the emotional goodbye, "They came to us, holding my hands and said goodbye to us. They said, 'Goodbye, thank you for helping us, please don't forget us.' As they hugged me, they started crying. They said, 'We don't have a home to go back to anymore, they took it from us.' I couldn't leave because they kept holding onto me and repeating it over and over."

In conclusion, Nu shares, "I was so touched by the people. The love between us was so deep although we had never met each other before. It wasn't just the goods that we gave them that they needed, but it was that we were there sharing the dangers with them." Another Shan volunteer said, "Yes. God opened all the ways. We had to go through and around the Burma Army, and God opened every way."



JEI P 20  
THE LIFE CAMERA

Shan IDP children after a GLC program. "They were so proud of their new GLC Shirts" - Nu

receiving government assistance like children in other parts of Burma. The teachers, in most cases, are educated within the system they now teach. She believes that in order to improve the system, the quality of teachers needs to improve. To immediately address the issue she believes teaching guides and student books for all grade levels would help. "The IDPs in Shan State are destitute and are exhausted. They need support from outside of Burma." It was apparent to Nu that especially the young adults were losing hope. She interviewed students at Waan Pong School and "each student believed they had no future." With no opportunity for work, education, farming, or establishing homes or business, these young adults are now fleeing across the border to Thailand,

The Shan are suffering, but the light of Jesus is in and amongst them through relief teams, the church, different organizations, and believers both amongst the Shan and those who travel to help them. Thank you so much for praying for the Shan and all the people of Burma in Jesus' name, not just for relief but for reconciliation in their country.

**PRAYER  
POINT** ▶

THAT HELP WOULD BE SENT TO THE OVER 50,000 IDPS IN SHAN STATE, INCLUDING REFORMS IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THAT TEACHERS WOULD RECEIVE UPDATED TEACHING GUIDES AND NEEDED ASSISTANCE.

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# WESTERN BURMA

## CHIN STATE

### DISPLACEMENT IN CHIN STATE: 2022 OVERVIEW BY DANA NATWICK

In January 2022, the Burma Army burned Mualzawl Village and Webula Village in the Falam Township, and Theizang Village in Tedim Township of Chin State. Several civilians were shot or were direct casualties of the destruction caused by the Burma Army. Included in this list are U Tin Thang (60 years old) and his father Pi Thluai Men (80 years old), eight civilians from Matupi Township near Ngalaing Village, and a young man named Mang Do Khup (29 years old). Evan Nangpi, pastor of the Siyin Baptist Church, located in Taingen Village, reported that around 200 people, most of his villagers as well as some from Hiangzing, fled to Khuasak, a village located about seven miles from Taingen.

As of March 2022 there has been an exponential increase in the number of internally displaced peoples (IDPs) who have fled to Zokhawthar, Mizoram (in India), specifically from the township of Falam. These camps, which usually hold around 1,000 people, now hold more than 3,000 people. During this time, the Burma Army sent and stationed

more of their troops at the Kalay Myo airport which lies just outside of the Falam Township. The reason for this was to fight against the People's Defense Force (PDF) who stationed themselves in a camp close to the border.

In July 2022, the Burma Army troops started moving from Falam to the Hakha highway. The village of Thlanrawn is about 13 miles from Falam. The Burma Army burned parts of Thlanrawn Village for the third time in less than a year. The first two times were in October 2021 when villagers were forced to flee to the IDP camp in Zokhawthar, just across the border in India. In Ramsey Village, the Burma Army broke into houses and on July 28th it was announced by the Chinland Defense Force's Zotung News and Information service that about 30 innocent people were arrested and detained while



Medical clinic at Zote IDP camp.

even more fled.

In September 2022, the Burma Army burned houses down in the villages of Namunta, Zamlimphai, and Khawhmunnuam, along the Indian border. Villagers from these affected areas in Chin State have been fleeing to different IDP camps in Mizoram.

In response to the Burma Army's invasions and attacks in 2022, relief teams supported the Chin people through Good Life Clubs, medical aid and food. Together with the Chin Youth Organization, these relief teams have been able to help many, including refugees in Mizoram, in the Champhai District area.



Houses burned down by the Burma Army in Kale Township, Chin State.

# "BECAUSE JESUS."

BY STEPHEN WIESENAUER

In Mizoram State of India there is a humanitarian organization called the Chin Relief Committee. It is a safe house and recovery center for wounded people that have had to flee political violence just across the India-Burma border in Chin State. There are currently 50 people recovering there. A lot of these people have lost limbs and are not only recovering but are learning how to walk and function normally again.

One of them, a man named Peter, is learning to walk on two new prosthetic legs. When I met him, there was something different about him: he carried a confident and joyful countenance – he wasn't downcast. As I sat next to him on the cot where he sat with his prosthetic limbs hanging down, he talked about his hometown, how he lost his legs, and how he got to Mizoram. The story was full of loss and tragedy – but there was a tone and vocabulary of hope threaded through his entire narrative.

At some point I asked how his new legs were coming along – if he was getting used to them. "I'll show you," he said. He slid down off the cot, and then carefully put his weight down on his legs and stood tall and straight. I cheered for him when he stood up. He replied, "I can do it because Jesus." When he stood, and said that, the source of Peter's joy and confidence became obvious – and it was infectious. You could literally see the other young men in that room



Peter standing with his new legs at the recovery center.



IDP shelters at Zokhawthar, Mizoram.

sit up straighter and look less downtrodden. You could see them long for this "thing" that Peter has. They got a taste of God's love at work in Peter's life. They tasted it, and it was good. And they hungered for more. A million watt lightbulb flashed into their darkness, and they longed for the light to keep shining.

When I left, the last thing I said to Peter was, "Jesus is with you, and he will use you to share the love of God to the people around you." He looked at the young men who were looking at him. Then he looked at me, smiled, and said, "Yes. Because Jesus."

Despite oppression and destruction caused by the Burma Army, the Chin people continue to be resilient and survive. Please pray for safety for their families, continued education for their children, and health while in densely-populated IDP camps.

PRAYER  
POINT ▶

THAT THE PEOPLE LIVING  
IN THE IDP CAMPS WOULD  
RECEIVE TIMELY AND  
EFFECTIVE SUPPORT THAT  
CARES FOR THEIR NEEDS IN  
MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT.

# NO RELIEF FOR THE ROHINGYA

FIRES RAVAGE OVERCROWDED REFUGEE CAMPS AGAIN AND AGAIN.

BY DS



8 March 2022: A mother wails with grief as the charred remains of her toddler are sifted from the ashes of what used to be Rohingya Camp 5 after yet another massive fire has ripped through the overcrowded camp, destroying over 700 shelters and forcing 11,000 people to become homeless once again. The Rohingya people fled a genocide in Burma, to neighboring Bangladesh, where they have lived, crammed like sardines, in some of the world's largest and most densely-packed refugee camps. When a fire starts and gets out of control, the bamboo-and-tarp shelters incinerate quickly and the fire spreads, often more quickly than people can run.

This isn't the first huge fire to destroy Rohingya refugee camps; unfortunately these camps experience many devastating fires annually, killing people and destroying shelters. Then, when the monsoon rains come, these same camps experience flooding and shelters are washed away. In this fire of March 8, five children were killed and 82 others were injured as a result of the fire. It took local fire teams over three hours before they had the fire under control.

"Our lives continue to be in limbo," one Rohingya refugee said. "In the absence of any meaningful progress towards durable solutions, an entire community is caught in the cycle of repair and loss." Since 2017, when the majority of Rohingya fled into these camps, there have been over 80 fire incidents recorded. "When your house is robbed you still at least have four walls and a roof. But when these fires break out you are left with nothing."

NGOs and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will provide the basics to repair the four walls and roof, but it leaves the people still in need of things like clothing, sleeping mats and blankets, pots for cooking, jars for carrying water, and other common household goods that have been turned to ash in the fire.

There still has been little progress to providing the over-one million Rohingya refugees any hope of resettlement or a country they can belong to.



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All photos taken at Rohingya Refugee Camp 5, Cox Bazar, Bangladesh.



**"WHEN YOUR HOUSE IS ROBBED YOU STILL AT LEAST HAVE FOUR WALLS AND A ROOF. BUT WHEN THESE FIRES BREAK OUT YOU ARE LEFT WITH NOTHING."**  
 - ROHINGYA REFUGEE IN COX BAZAR

30 widows with their own new sewing business as a way to support themselves. Please pray for the Rohingya and for those who have lost loved ones and shelters in the most recent fires. Pray for a viable solution for the Rohingya people, that they would have a country to belong to and freedom.

Speaking to a Bengali soldier in 2017, we were told, "When a friend comes over unannounced, you welcome them into your home and try to make them comfortable. But when that friend stays for one week or longer, there needs to be a new conversation." Rohingya refugees flooded across the border in 2017 with much attention by the international community and with much hope that their stay in neighboring Bangladesh would be short-lived; but five years into this crisis, they are mostly forgotten by the international community and no major efforts to help solve the crisis of their belonging have been fruitful. They are left in camps that are surrounded by barbed wire fences and armed guards, to exist at the whim of fires, floods and diseases.



In 2021 and 2022, FBR Rohingya relief teams have been able to help their fellow refugees in this area by installing 35 well/water pumps, two solar projects for a school and education center, rebuilding three school buildings while providing uniforms and supplies for 210 students, supplying food to 300 families, supplying blankets and mosquito nets to 200 families, and supporting

THAT THE ONE MILLION ROHINGYA REFUGEES WOULD FIND A HOME FOR THEIR HEARTS THROUGH KNOWING JESUS CHRIST DESPITE THEIR CONTINUED HOMELESSNESS AS A PEOPLE GROUP.

**PRAYER  
POINT** ▶

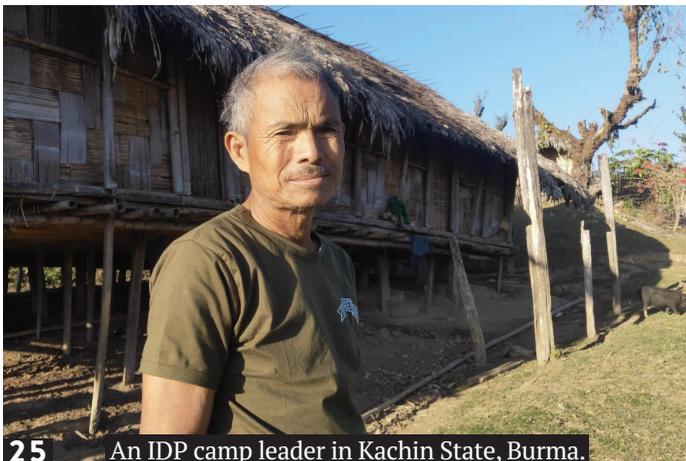
# NORTHERN BURMA

## KACHIN STATE

### REACHING THOSE ISOLATED FROM HELP: SUPPORTING THOSE AFFECTED BY BRUTAL ATTACKS IN NORTHERN BURMA

BY MICHELLE DINKINS

The largest northern Burma ethnic armed organization (EAO), the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), thoroughly and consistently reports the attacks and atrocities committed by the Burma Army each month in the regions of Kachin State, northern Shan State, and Sagaing Division. Likewise, the Burma Army consistently attacks its own people in these areas each month. Using high speed military jets and helicopters, the Burma Army carries out ruthless attacks from the ground and air on the ethnic-controlled regions, including civilian areas. The most devastating attack occurred on October 23rd this year, when the Burma Army bombed an outdoor music concert in Hpakant Township, Kachin State, killing between 60 and 80 people in the attack and obliterating the area.



25 An IDP camp leader in Kachin State, Burma.



Scarcity of water in the mountainous regions leads to poor hygiene, affecting the health of everyone, including children.

Though the Burma Army holds superior firing capabilities, they do not hold superior public support. As of 2022, the northern Burma EAOs have become increasingly supported by the National Unity Government People's Defense Forces (NUG PDF), some of which now have their own northern Burma branches, such as the Kachin People's Defense Force. During the month of October it was reported that there were seven separate branches. These regional PDF branches often fight alongside EAOs, and as the year has progressed, have started fighting the Burma Army independently.

In light of the new sense of comradery in the north, the Burma Army set new records in their murderous attacks on their people. For example, over the last five years, the KIA has reported a total of 201 Burma Army-initiated military clashes in northern Burma during the month of July, a relatively low number considering this is the height of monsoon season, with flooding and washed out roads. Of these 201 clashes, 77% of them have occurred in the last two years since the recent coup, and July 2022 holds the highest number of clashes in the last five years. Other numbers include August 2022, when more than 400 houses were burned down by Burma Army troops in a single month, and in October 2022 when approximately 130 lives, mostly civilian, were lost due to Burma Army attacks.

Conflict and human rights abuses perpetrated by the Burma Army continue driving up the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) across northern Burma, consequently spreading thin EAO resources, as they not only try to fight and protect their people, but provide for their basic needs as well. Outside support is crucial but risky.



FBR Kachin team traveling to meet the remote mountain villages.

During the month of April 2022, a Kachin relief team made its way through jungle trails and around Burma Army checkpoints to bring help, hope, and love to five rural villages in the mountains of northern Burma. The team's month-long mission served villagers with medical care, food, blankets, Good Life Clubs, leadership training, and more.

During monsoon season in Kachin State, washed-out mountain roads and mudslides take lives every year. However, weather is not the only element making travel and livelihood challenging for these people. Villagers have been unable to get needed resources from neighboring towns to their remote locations due to the presence of occupying Burma Army forces and Covid-19 restrictions. "Last year, eight villagers died of illness due to lack of medicine despite the availability of health clinics [in other towns]. There are also deaths and illnesses this year, mainly due to the lack of medicine and poor transportation to hospitals," reports the Kachin relief team leader. On this mission, the team was able to treat 113 villagers and teach over 336 students about basic health care and hygiene.

Lack of medical care is not the only factor affecting children in this area. The relief team interviewed several teachers who have set up temporary schools in these villages as adequate education is difficult to access. Local churches and the Kachin Independence Organization support these schools as they can; however, many teachers shared that the support is inconsistent and they are still in need of many basic resources such as textbooks and paper. Basic infrastructure is also lacking. Most of these schools are built using bamboo and thus easily ruined. Parents mentioned the option of sending their children to larger towns for better education but do not have the means to do so.

The village teachers have already begun experiencing an increase in students joining these temporary schools from surrounding IDP camps as fighting and displacement increases around these areas. New challenges will come with increased student numbers and no clear path for additional resources. A young pastor, Pau Hkyi Yaw Htung from Uma Village, explained that it is difficult to reach out to non-governmental organizations and other places for help due to their lack of communication lines: there are no telephones or even electricity. The 85 families in these five villages are aware of the future impact the current difficulties may have for their children. Nhpang Naw Awn, a pastor in Ngum La Village, elaborates: "To make money, we can't go anywhere due to the bad political situation and Covid-19 disease. I am worried about the future of the children. In our mountainous area, no social assistance has come to help, so health, social, educational and economic development are lagging behind."

The Kachin relief team plans to return in the future to help with aid and to remind these people that despite their location or circumstances, they are not alone and not forgotten. Thank you for praying with us for those in Kachin State as well as the other regions of northern Burma, that their needs would be met in tangible ways and that they would know the ever-present, ever-sufficient love of Christ.

- THAT GOD CREATE  
PATHWAYS FOR ACCESS TO  
OUTSIDE RESOURCES.

- THAT THE KACHIN PEOPLE WOULD  
KNOW THAT THEY ARE SEEN BY  
THE ONE TRUE GOD DESPITE THEIR  
ISOLATION.

PRAYER  
POINTS ▶

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# HEADHUNTERS, COMMUNIST ARMY, DRUG LORDS BECOMING CHRISTIAN – THE WA

BY ALLAN EUBANK, FOUNDER OF THAI CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION

In the 11th century, the Tai/Thai people, pushed by the Han Chinese and later the Mongols, started moving south from what is now western China through Burma, Laos, and into Thailand. The Wa were the indigenous people of much of that region. They were a sub-tribe of the greater Mon-Khmer culture. Their tradition says that they were compelled by evil spirits to take heads to appease the evil spirits and have fruitful crops. By the early 1950s, the Chinese Kuomintang Army had pushed into the Wa area.

On January 1, 1968, the Chinese Communist Army pushed into Myanmar to expel the Kuomintang. A civil war broke out among the Wa, with a large part coming under the control of The United Wa State Army. In April 1989, the Wa formed the United Wa State. They have an agreement with the Burma government allowing them autonomy in their region and they have the strongest non-government army in Burma, because it is backed by the Chinese, to this day.

The Wa have a traditional myth telling that the One True God, Siyiex, had appeared to a Wa shaman in the Yunnan area of western China around 1900. Siyiex commanded that the Wa stop headhunting and return to him. They would find him by ordaining a white pony and following the pony to a white man who would have a book to lead them back to him. They followed the pony for about 200 miles to the Wa city of Cheng Tung. The pony walked to a well and looked down. When the men looked in the well, they saw William Marcus Young digging for water to establish his mission station. They returned and brought back a delegation for the first baptisms in April 1908. Christianity slowly began to spread against the opposition of spirit worshipers and communists.

In 1993, the Wa foreign minister contacted Allan and David Eubank to come and help them in four ways: to become Christian; to find a way to replace drug production in the economy; educational, agricultural and medical assistance; and to work toward a democratic union in Burma with autonomous regions for the tribal groups. The pictures following outline our involvement and the Wa needs for help now.



We continue to send help across the border to Wa State. We also helped the Wa/Lawa build a hostel in Chiang Mai, Thailand, (pictured bottom left). Other ways we have helped over the years is by providing cleft pallet surgeries as well as partnering with the Prosthesis Foundation of H.R.H The Princess Mother in Thailand to provide prosthesis operations. More than 300 mostly Wa people have crossed in to Thailand to receive these operations.



In October 2022 three areas in the Southern Wa region were flooded. Their fields, house and topsoil were washed away. We were able to bring in food, medicine and clothing but their need is ongoing.

This year, there have been many baptisms and more to come. In November 2022, 2,475 new Wa Bibles with Wa hymns were distributed to the Wa Christians in Burma along the Thai border, along with 10,400 gospel booklets.



December 7, 2022: Pastor John of the Wa Christian church baptized 117 new believers in Burma. Pastor John has been a friend and partner with us since we first started working in Burma in 1994 . He is a humble and faithful leader in evangelism, has helped translate the Wa Bible, has cared for the Wa Children’s Hospital we support in Thailand, continues helping IDPs, and every year helps with outreach and has baptized hundreds of people in Burma . It is a great blessing to partner with him and learn from him as we serve in Jesus name.



Photos from top to bottom, left to right: (1) Distributing Bibles in Wa State, (2) Some of the 117 new Wa believers (3) Sha (real name Ye Shien) being baptized by Pastor John. We met her at 16 years old; her leg had been blown off by a landmine at the age of 8. At 19 years old, Sha received a new leg and began working in a clinic in Wa State. Sha, now 20, beams with new life in Christ as she comes out of the baptistry. (4) Wa praying to receive Christ.



-THAT THE WA PEOPLE WOULD FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST AS THEIR ONE TRUE GOD.

-THAT GOD WOULD USE THE PROSTHETICS RECEIVED BY THE OVER 300 WA PEOPLE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HE CARES FOR THEM. **28**

**PRAYER  
POINTS** ▶

Pastor Edmond prays at a training, January 2022.



# NEW LIFE

SINCE THE COUP

**“WE NEED JESUS IN OUR HEART.  
ONLY JESUS CAN GIVE THE  
PEACE. PEACE COMES FROM  
GOD. NOT A PEACE MAN-MADE,  
NOT A PEACE SET UP BY GOVERN-  
MENT, PEACE ONLY FROM GOD  
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.”**

– PASTOR EDMOND



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Cheering after the 10 baptisms.

# NEW LIFE SINCE THE COUP

10 RANGERS ASK TO BE BAPTIZED IN KAREN STATE, BURMA.

BY MICHELLE DINKINS

On January 5, 2022, 10 rangers decided to proclaim their faith in Christ through baptism before many fellow rangers, instructors, and community members. For some, this decision is one that will be well-received and celebrated as they return home to their communities. For others, this bold proclamation is accompanied by unknowns of how families will react to their decision to put their trust in Jesus. Each ranger decided to follow Jesus whatever the cost might be.

Many attributed their decision to the daily devotions led by Karen Pastor Edmond during the past three months of training, and the environment of love and forgiveness that Free Burma Rangers tries to live out.

When asking Pastor Edmond about these 10 men and women, he shares, "Some are from background Christian families, some arrived and first heard the gospel in camp. Some had Christian friends - but now have experience with Christians and these dangerous times... So when we share the life of Jesus and how to love each other from the Bible they think they would like to live this too. The 'love each other' - they really like this. That this love, it comes from God."

This past year for Burma has been marked by a significant amount of death and yet new life continues to emerge in the darkness. The light of these new lives in Christ is what



Pastor Edmond baptizes a new believer, January 2022.

illuminates hope in a country that seems enveloped by the darkness of evil. John 1:5 states it perfectly: "In him [Christ] was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

When reflecting on the heightened challenges since last year's coup, Pastor Edmond simply sees the good in how God is moving. He says, "There have been many challenges in these difficult times during Covid and the coup. But this is a very precious time God has given us and God has been very wonderful to us. He saves us every time through all of the difficulty." Pastor Edmond is experiencing God's perfect love that transcends his current reality. Part of this is the hope in seeing a unified Burma.

"As a follower of Jesus in Burma, what is something you would like to share with the world?" I ask Pastor Edmond.

Without hesitation he responds, "I would like to share with all the people in the world, if we receive Christ in our heart we will be changed. If the whole world knows Jesus and is filled with Jesus' love, we will have peace. We need Jesus in our heart. Only Jesus can give the peace. Peace comes from God. Not a peace man-made, not a peace set up by government, peace only from God through Jesus Christ."

Thank you for praying for people like Pastor Edmond and the 10 new lives given to Christ this past year as they follow Jesus, bring peace, live as lights in the darkness, love, and serve all who they meet.

PRAYER  
POINTS ►

- THAT THE PEACE OF JESUS CHRIST WOULD BE KNOWN  
IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE PEOPLE OF BURMA.

- THAT GOD WOULD EMBOLDEN ALL CHRISTIANS ACROSS  
BURMA TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST.

# JUNGLE ANGELS

BY DR. JOHN SHAW

She arrived shocked  
and pale, so that we swung  
Into gear before we  
understood the cause.  
12 years old and  
hanging on by ten  
white nails to life,  
ebbing away before our eyes.

We did what was needed  
and got her BP up and her  
HR down; urine flowing again  
in dribs. But she stared  
at mom, concentrating on  
the pain in her belly, 4 days on  
and waxing.

Around us, a war, chronic  
yet acute, with jets bombing schools and no  
one moving anywhere.  
A pandemic had locked the borders  
and a coup sealed the locks.  
Out of options for her surgical abdomen,  
we pled with heaven for help.

It came in jungle angels  
who said there might be a way:  
carried in a hammock on a bamboo pole,  
through hills and over rivers,  
picked up in a truck for the big mountains  
her mother quiet beside her, taken to the  
river that was empty by decree.

Snuck downriver past army camps who  
shelled any boat that dared float by.

They dared, our jungle angels.  
They put in at night, halfway down, and  
dosed her again with antibiotics, pain meds,  
fluids... The next morning, they took  
another boat further down the forbidden  
border river  
to a town on the other side, met by quiet  
friends  
and a truck who raced her to hospital where  
she could get what she needed.

Oh my God,  
fleet hand of rescue,  
thank you for jungle angels.

