

## **Øjenvidneberetning af ansat i den katolske kirke i Burma**

*Nedenstående tekst er sendt af en ansat i den katolske kirke i Burma. Han giver her en meget stærk beretning om situationen i Burma. Han ønsker at være anonym, hvorfor der ikke er noget navn angivet. Teksten er uredigeret, men har fået indført et par opklarende bemærkninger i parentes.*

### **Eye Witness, employed by the Catholic church, telling about the situation in Burma**

Thanks for all the inquiries of support and sympathy. People of Burma need you and your sympathy.

I am deeply sucked into the work now, as after the day I went to the XX office and brought them for a meeting with the Archbishop. We had an urgent meeting and a committee on Burma disaster relief is formed. I am helping in training the volunteers, working on projects, assessments and also in the writing of the appeals. Last six days I was on the move, today I returned. I do hope I will have time to write a longer report. Today we had a meeting with supporters and tomorrow I will be training another 40 volunteers. Church responds, since they do not have experience in meeting disasters of this magnitude, even my little experience is useful to them. So I am very often out with them. Planning, training and visiting sites.....

Suffice to say, Burma weeps today and the tears of the innocents wounds our sensibilities. I have seen the suffering of these graceful people. When nature colludes in compounding their agony, heart gets mutilated with despair.

I just returned from one of the most affected areas. Nearly 30,000 people met a watery grave. In Kyaiklatt, Phaypon and Bogalay (100 kilometres south/west from the Yangon delta) and the villages around, thousands perished.

I was far off in Phaypon, down the Irrawaddy River with the bodies of human beings and cattle floating along the boat ride, we reached a destroyed village.

We were the first outsiders to reach them. Cyclone Nargis bombed them, flattened them and left them rattled with their spirit rattled.

In a sadistic show of 'shock and awe' nature attacked the hapless men and women at night, attacking them from the seas, river and from the air. Menacingly howling winds, at a blistering pace tore through settlement, as fighter bombs would have bombed.

It is a sad sight. To my eyes which have seen Tsunami, Kashmir earthquake, this is really overwhelming. Nature unleashed an orgy of death and mayhem, wounding an already suffering population.

Yesterday, with tears in their eyes, women explained how the waves snatched their babes from their bosoms. A mighty tidal wave ensured that tears stayed on as the children embraced watery graves.

As our boat moved along, a body of a five old boy drifted across, child of a mourning mother somewhere, the boy drifting in an unknown waters, waiting for a burial, unwept and unsung.

People do not have drinking water. As their settlements were crushed into pieces, the decaying debris, in the water logged terrain emanates deep smell. Food is not there. Children were biting at the coconut shells as we went in. Dead animals are spread out near that debris. The people neither have the energy nor the will to bury them. There were many refugees, living in roofless churches and monasteries. Help has not reached them.

We are doing what is possible in Burma. Last two days we are reaching out to the starving people. With diesel prices skyrocketing and not available, transport is still a problem.

There is still no electricity and water even in Yangon.

Burma is in deep mourning. The count has crossed 80,000 (dead) and is still counting. The majestic Irrawaddy was the mother to these people. It gave them food, was the transport water way, serpentine majestically through some of the most beautiful rice fields in the world. The delta was an alluring beauty before Irrawaddy fell to the evil charms of Nargis. The mother became the monster, the beauty became a beast.

The lands and fields were ravished on that night. The people will take ages to come to normalcy. That needs great fellowship, not only in material needs.

I will keep updated as and when internet is available. Be assured the people of Burma are grateful to every simple good deed.

In a remote corner, wading through slush mud, we reached a small broken church, where famished refugees were waiting for outsiders. When we reached there, they welcomed with gratitude and served a cup of Burmese tea, the only thing they could have.

May this great people see the light....

With regards.....