

BORDER NEWS BORDER NEWS

NEWS FROM THE CHRIST CHURCH BORDER KAREN MINISTRY



This Issue:

- COVID 19 in Noh Bo
- Pastoral care & loss
- Sports
- Farewell Rev Saw Baw Soe
- Australian Aid and Sustainability
- How to donate

We Need your help!!

We urgently need medical supplies. We have had very little funding this year, so we need your help!!

Sadly, the impact of COVID 19 means we have had no overseas visitors venturing to the campus, we hope for a day when the borders will be open, folks will be inspired and called to serve there.

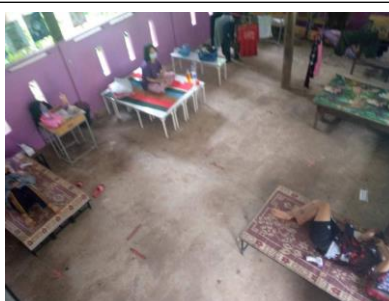
The effect of COVID has left us with very few donations coming in. Furthermore, seen a rise in prices and we are desperately short of funds!!!



COVID 19 has reached Noh Bo and Mae la Camp

The impacts of the coronavirus pandemic swept across the world including Thailand. After relatively slow spread of the virus in 2020, Delta variant hit Thailand severely in May 2021. The challenges of the virus have truly been nationwide, even reaching the extremities of Thailand so it was only a matter of time before it reached Noh Bo and the Mae La camp and has had a great impact on the boarding school students, the orphanage and the 3 nurseries run by our Karen Ministry.

We are sad to report that we have had an outbreak of Covid. So far 31 students and 3 teachers have tested positive and it's spreading rapidly. The assembly hall and classrooms have been transformed into makeshift quarantine care with the chairs and desks have been piled together to make beds. The local health authority visited Noh Bo to test everyone. Restrictions in movement has complicated the transportation of essentials from Mae Sot to Noh Bo. We are in the process of sending emergency supplies and medical equipment desperately needed to treat the students in our care.



Impact of COVID 19 in Noh Bo and the nurseries in Mae la camp

Thank you for praying for Tamla!!!

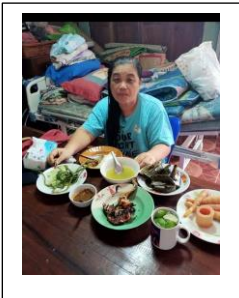
Tamla was in hospital with COVID 19 but we are so thankful she is home and recovering well. Tamla is the Karen Anglican Ministry at the border (KAMB) Secretary and coordinator. She oversees the Karen Ministry in the border and is the key liaison between the community leaders and Christ church

The country went into semi lockdown in May 2021 and now it's in total lockdown. The Thai borders are closed, the schools closed in late August early September. Noh Bo Academy boarding school is in lockdown with 63 students learning from and continuing to study with many safety measures.

This academic year faced many challenges due to COVID-19 prevention measures especially restricting movements of people from place to place. Communities were strictly advised to stay at home and be safe which forced education leaders to restrict the movement of students and teachers. Student education activities adapt to new routines such as scheduling online/ "small group home learning" as part of social distancing.

The Mae refugee camp had an even more trying year, as part of COVID-19 prevention measures left the camp in total lock down. Few NGO`s tried to maintain their support at current level however some NGOs could not maintain their support at all. In the Mae La Karen Ministry looks after three Nurseries and one Orphanage camp and this has had a devastating effect on the orphanage and 3 nurseries in Mae la camp.

In addition, the pandemic led to an increase in prices, due to the restriction of movements of goods. The limited job opportunities and reduction in income options, all increased the trials for the Karen community.



CCB KAREN MINISTRY MISSION
"To provide spiritual and practical support working towards a greater degree of self-reliance to the Karen community living in the Thai-Myanmar borders"

SUPPORTING THE STUDENTS THROUGH LOSS

“How Long oh Lord?” (Psalm 13 v 1)

I’m sure the words of the Psalmist have been on many peoples lips these past 18 months, through the worldwide pandemic. Noh Bo Academy has had its own cause to ask this question too, facing travel restrictions and lockdown which only allowed part of the community to remain at the school. In addition to this over the last few weeks one member of staff suffered from Covid herself, as well as losing her dear mother to Covid too. A local retired Priest and friend of Noh Bo died and just last week a young member of the staff, Rev Kabaw Soe died suddenly and unexpectedly on site. Any one of these sad losses would have been acutely felt by the community but the compound losses have had a huge impact on all the staff and students.

Christ Church felt a duty of care to offer prayer and support however we could, despite being unable to be present just now. As much of my work life and experience has involved counselling bereaved families and in particular young people, Chris asked if I would speak with some of the staff team to assess how we could help.

During two extended Zoom calls I was able to hear the details of recent events and the individuals involved and in particular the impact and concerns for students. As with many family deaths during Covid only very few people were allowed to attend the funeral services of the three loved ones who had died, taking away that first ritual for Christians to grieve and commit the loved one to God’s care.

The first part of the plan was that local clergy and Bishop Doe would conduct a memorial service on site the following day, Monday, for Rev Kabaw Soe. All the staff and students could attend along with others including Rev Norman and I on Zoom. The students sang some beautiful songs accompanied by other students on keyboard and guitar and Bishop Doe and Norman and I were able to speak, the Bishop in Karen and ourselves through translation by Bishop Doe.

Secondly although I would have gladly spent time with both staff and students to listen and counsel, during our Zoom calls it became clear there was a better option and one which has been important to me on other occasions. That was for Doctor Margaret, a Karen medical doctor currently volunteering at Noh Bo, to be the person “on the ground” and who knows the staff and students well and knew Rev Kabaw Soe, to be the one to meet with individuals and assess the needs. Margaret and I went through some of the basic needs as we saw them, the shock, guilt for some, fear of evil spirits on site for others and how best to work and pray with these issues. Dr Margaret will continue to support those on the community, and we will keep in touch over the next few weeks.

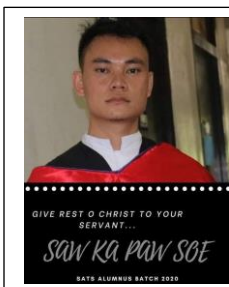
Please pray that all staff and students will be comforted and feel God’s peace and presence as they continue to grieve and come to terms with their loss. It is my hope that they will be able to move from “How long O Lord” in v 1 of Psalm 13 to “But I have trusted in Your steadfast love, my heart shall rejoice in your salvation” Psalm 13 v 5.

By Susan Jones

FOOTBALL PROVIDED A LIFELINE DURING SEMI LOCKDOWN STUDENT WERE ABLE TO FIND REFUGE IN FOOTBALL AND VOLLYBALL



Empowering the girls with sports: The girls finally have their own volleyball court and after school they can play a game without watching the boys in the sidelines. The girls have their own football team.



Celebrating Saw Rev Ka Baw Soe's life

With great sadness I write to say Rev Saw Ka Baw Soe tragically passed away suddenly on the 6th of September, Memorial service was held on the 13th of September with the staff and students. They sang beautifully and remembered Rev Ka Baw Soe with love and care.

Rev Saw Ka Baw Soe oversaw the sustainability project. He was instrumental in driving the project forward. He did an excellent job in training the students in growing vegetation and farming fish and pigs. He lived and worked in Noh Bo. He was dedicated and cared for the students and he will be greatly missed by the students, staff and the community.



AUSTRALIAN AID AND SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE!!!



Fish & Pig Farming in Noh Bo



The Australian Anglican Church are funding the sustainability project in Noh Bo. The three pigs also arrived in Noh Bo and are being raised by the students. The students who are boarders are split into 3 groups and they rotate in taking responsibility for animal raising, fresh vegetables and fruit farming or learning to cook. This will enable students to learn new skills and prepare them for the future. The aim of the projects is to promote self-reliance and to educate the students on a potential livelihood. We are delighted to say now have 1500 Catfish, The students had an opportunity to help build the pond and treat it and release the fish and now help raise it.



Building Interdependence through Greater Self-Reliance: working towards a better Future

Sustainability was the buzz word as CCB sought to respond to requests from stakeholders for Noh Bo Academy to demonstrate increasing levels of self-reliance and participation in sustainable programming. This is also aligned with the CCB Karen Ministry Subcommittee's 5-10-year strategic plan for our various Karen projects, with a particular aim of supporting greater independence for Noh Bo operations. Our hope was that these projects will take root and be nurtured at Noh Bo

What your donations can do

The work of our Karen Ministry continues, and we have a full budget for 2021. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. Here is a picture of how your donations can help.

Mae La Camp Support for a Nursery

School student	1,600 baht per year
Support for a nursery school teacher	6,000 baht per year
Nursery School food supplement	2,200 baht per month
Caring for an orphanage child	5,120 baht per year



Noh Bo Academy Students and Staff

Day Student	8,000 baht per term
Boarding Students	12,000 baht per year
Teachers (13, including Principal)	Average salary 3,500 baht (\$75) per month
Staff (1 office – 3 cooks - 2 supervisors)	Average salary 2,500 baht (\$46) per month

Noh Bo Food and Nourishment

The largest portion of the budget is food - essential in a boarding school for refugees. We need 65 large bags of rice each month for 10 months, at about 850 baht per bag.

The school also spends about 46,000 baht a month on fresh produce, giving an annual food bill of approximately 927,500 baht (\$31,000).

Education Materials

Each year supplies of paper, exercise books, text books, pens, markers, etc. are 40,000 baht (\$1,333). Arts, crafts and sewing materials are extras and depends on special donations

Uniforms

Noh Bo students take great pride in their uniform.

Annual cost for students is	18,000 baht (\$600)
Teachers uniforms per year	9,000 baht (\$300)
Sport kits per year	10,350 baht (\$350)

Utilities

Electricity approx	4,700 baht (\$156) per month
Gas bottles at	300 baht (\$6) per month.
Water at	300 baht (\$6) per month
Internet provision is expensive –	2,675 baht (\$93) per month



Health and Wellness

Toiletries for students cost about 40,000 baht (\$1,333) a year.

Medicines, dental and hospital bills average 3,000 baht (\$100) per month.

Blankets are needed in the cool season – 100 baht each for 100 students – 10,000 baht (\$333)

HOW TO MAKE A DONATION:

HOW ARE WE MANAGING OUR FUNDS?

WE ARE FOCUSING ON THE STUDENTS' ESSENTIAL NEEDS AND MAKING CUTBACKS WHEREVER POSSIBLE. WE ARE ALSO WORKING ON GROWING VEGETABLES TO REDUCE FOOD COST & HOLDING FUND RAISING EVENTS TO RAISE MONEY....

Your continued prayers and financial support are needed more than ever! We send a heartfelt 'thank you' for the past efforts and hopefully, for your future support, as we struggle to reach the levels of funds we had pre virus.



Cheques made out in foreign currency attract very high transfer fees in Thailand (\$60).

Cheques in Thai Baht are no problem.

Electronic transfer is best!

Please email us on accounts@christchurchbangkok.org to let us know when you make a payment, so that we can ensure that it arrives and issue a receipt.

Bank Account for Karen (New) A/C:

Siam Commercial Bank

A/C Name: Christ Church English

Branch: CP Tower

A/C No: 168-225-876-6

A/C Tape: Saving A/C

SWIFT code: SICOTHBK

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

