

## Nargis Story - 4

A story told by a volunteer donor from Rangoon

May 18, 2008

We came back from Laputta today. This was not the first time for us. Nothing was more improved than the first time. But we found more devastating, frustrating and sorrowful things than the previous visits. We had a chance to know that what we saw on government television was just propaganda; to show international community that they could do aids works on their own. Because they just provide assistance to refugee camps on the areas of towns but not to villages where there are tremendous troubles, quite far away from big towns. The Commander of regional command, Chairman of Relief Committee, sometimes with some foreigners came to refugee camps to show aids materials and to be taken photographs. In reality, nobody has reached so far the badly affected areas in some village tracts.

Some well wishers and well off people living in some towns want to go and help people in badly need of assistance, but they couldn't do that especially due to transportation. For example, it is difficult to hire a small boat not in a good condition due to illegal order of military authorities. They said 'we cannot guarantee your security', 'why are you going to these places where there is nothing and nobody?' and so on. Some people does not want to take risk of being looted or robbed on the way to far away places as there are rumor about bad security on the way.

Boat people demanded three times of common prices for potential risk of security and damage. On the way, there are military check points and you might be interrupted for interrogation. Why do they block assistance like that? Even refugees on town are forced to relocate to another town or place as authorities cannot take responsibility for long term. The Commander told the refugees that reconstruction of ones' home and economic situation is on ones' own as he can help just for short term. People have to clear their streets, build their houses by themselves and build up their own businesses again. People who cannot come to town have to live on their own or die on their spots.

In these villages, dead bodies are not rotten or decayed as they are soaked with salty water. But villagers did not recognize who is who. They couldn't bury or cremate these bodies. So they just pulled them down into the current of river or stream. In this way, a lot of bodies are still in the water floating or submerged. People in some villages cannot rebuild their houses. So they have to cover their huts with plastic sheets. They have no extra clothes. They have to cook and drink water in the stream. They have to cook and eat wet rice. They have no medicines to cure even diarrhea. They have no seed to grow in the coming rice growing season. Media attention also abated in international arena.

**They have no hope so far. So they have no future.**

**Some photos taken by a well wisher volunteer**



**Tha Yet Taw monastery refugee camp in Laputta Town**



**Some family has to take shelter on the street**





**Here we eat, here we sleep, here we play, and here we stay**



*Collected and presented by Information Department of  
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