

*Meet and Greet, Darwin NT 26/10/2019 Saturday*

*Only 12 Karen families are settling in Darwin NT so far. Surprisingly 8 young people are serving Australian army. The only girl is a military medic. The rest are with different units like engineering, infantry, transportation and so on. Most adults are employed in different fields. One lady is currently out of job from plant nursery as the business is going slow. Hon Terry Mills MP, Dy Mayor Benjamin Giesecke, Ps Malcolm Good of Casuarina Baptist Church, one officer from Malaluca Organisation, some sympathisers from local and Aboriginal community are present at the function. Saw Victor AKT, myself and 4 local Karen's share the information and needs of NT Karen Community.*

*My speech,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished Guests and my fellow Karens, I'd like to thank Australia and its people who allowed our people to call Australia home. I also acknowledge and pay my respects to the Aboriginal people and leaders of the past and present.*

*I'm Paul Kyaw, Job Development Consultant of MSCWA and also the president of Karen Welfare Association WA. I am here to visit my people and also introduce them with the NT authorities and people.*

*Please let me share the information and facts of Burma and my people Karen. After 3 Anglo-Burmese wars Burma was colonised by the British in 1885 and the Burma kingdom came to the end. Burma is bordering Thailand, Laos, China, India and Bangla Desh. Burma is sandwiched between two superpowers of China and India. No less than 120 ethnic groups are living in Burma, whilst Burmans are the biggest group. Burma has a long coastline with huge natural gas reserves in its water. Natural resources, metals, jade, mines, rain forest, three mountain ranges, four main rivers, fertile flat land of Irrawaddy delta, beautiful monsoon weather and friendly people with high percentage of literacy are precious resources to make a nation rich. But due to mismanagement and poor policies of military leaders,*

once the first rice exporter of the world, Burma became the least developed country of the world by UNO in 1987. Burma was granted independence on 04/01/1948 by the British. Like many other colonies of the British and European countries, Burma's independence was born with the civil still raging until today. Many nations are experiencing power struggles. But Burma is different as we have ethnic struggles for self determination against the biggest group of Burman. Most resources come from frontier regions belonged to different ethnic groups. The military seized the power on 02/03/1962 and ruled Burma with iron fist.

But the Burmans are benefiting while the natives are starving. There is a big gap between the ruled and the rulers. In 1950s, one US dollar was equal 4 kyats of Burma currency. Today one US dollar is trading with 1200 kyats. Today one factory worker in Burma is earning less than 10A\$ a day. But all the materials are trading at the price of Australia. Burma military has been fighting against ethnic rebel groups for more than six decades. On 08/08/1988 the whole country took the road and stood against the military regime. They simply gunned down the defenceless civilians.

As the result many fled Burma and took refuge in nearby country Thailand. Some went to India, Malaysia, Singapore and even Japan. That was the beginning of the refugee in the history of Burma. In 2015 Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy NLD came to power by landslide election victory. But the military forced the dual-ruling system in 2008 unpopular constitution.

Many overseas businesses came to invest in Burma. But many pulled out due to unfavourable economic system. Burma has more than 40 billionaires, said one new source. But all are high ranking army officers and their cronies.

*Karen refugees and Australia*

About 10,000 or more Karen refugees are residing in Australia. But NT is the least in number. Nail in Victoria was at the brink of economy collapse a few years ago. The Karens moved in and reversed the situation. Katanning in WA experienced the same with the Karen refugees in 2008. ( Please check YouTube).

*One Anglican Church called " All Saints " in Tennessee USA was rescued by the Karen refugees and back to normal life. ( Please download All Saints from YouTube). We are with limited English and education. But we love to work. I do admit that we also have some bad apples, some rowdy ones. But we feel guilty to be on the dole.*

*I have a slogan," Wherever we go, we grow, ". At least we love to grow veggies our back yards. In Perth we have 2 Ph D holders, over a dozen nurses qualified from Australian university, over 300 factory workers, 10 driving instructors, many child and aged carers, many abattoir workers, construction workers and social services workers. I want to help build NT with my people of refugee and also with Skilled Migrants from Burma and overseas. I am happy to discuss this matter with any one in good faith.*

*Thank you.*