President’s Annual Report for 2018-2019

Girrawheen Hub, 07/09/2019

First of all I want to congratulate the entire working team of KWA for your selfless contribution of your precious time, energy and finance to keep the organisation run. We’ve faced many trouble and problems throughout the year. Also we achieved many things. The most valuable success is the recognition of WA and Federal governments. Unlike many years before we have created credibility and assurance from WA government. I’d like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Hon Margaret Quirk MLA and Hon Janine Freeman MLA through their sincere assistance we are operating and delivering our services to our community in this prestigious Girrawheen Hub with credibility and dignity. We’ve been dealing with some senators since our arrival in Australia. Again through God’s grace Hon Dean Smith MLA, senator for WA, is working closely with us since our last Karen New Year. Together with our Vice President Joansy Pegrum, he went visit our Karen refugees in K.L, Malaysia and Thailand early this year. Again he promised to visit those places and Burma inn January 2020 with Joansy Pegrum. He invited our representatives to the Parliament House WA in June 2019. Through his effort KWA was tentatively granted $200,000 for the community activities in culture and other needs.

Please let me highlight the Australian Karen Social Network seminar held in Melbourne in April 2019. AKSN seminar is held occasionally eastern states due to feasibility of candidates and location. AKSN normally has only 2 candidates from WA at a time. Candidates from WA, Vic, NSW and Qld with one Karen church minister from Thailand were present at the seminar. We hope that one day we will have candidates from ACT, NT, S.A and Tasmania will join in. We got opportunity to study the services provided at the Wyndham Community Education Centre, especially in proudly operating 2 manual weaving mills and decorating the entire centre with Karen linens and local products. As the consequences of that visit the Multicultural Services Centre WA starts talking to some departments to build the looms for our community to earn passive income.

I’d like to express our gratitude to Mr. Leon Martin, the lawyer who also opens his door for our community in legal matters. Only today I talked to him about the Will-making process. He promised to come in due time. He also helps our communities in Katanning and Albany. We also have many organisations and institutes like Carey Baptist College, MSCWA, Mercycare, Baptist Churches of WA, City of Stirling, City of Wanneroo, Shire of Katanning, shire of Albany, Churches and many that help our community whenever the needs arise.

Through tireless effort of Joansy Pegrum our children are enjoying valuable Christmas gifts and brand new bicycles. But I think that we still need the corporation of churches and monastery to make our organisation stronger. The Karen New Year celebration is the most successful landmark of our community as we always conducted with religious organisations and especially the Australian Karen Organisation. We always participate in the Karen Martyrs’ Day and Befriending ( Wrist-tying Ceremony ) organised by AKO. So far this year we participated in Community Festival of City of Armadale, Carey Baptist College, Harmony day in Katanning. Great southern Karen communities in Katanning and Albany are celebrating Karen New Year in alternate year and also well-known by the respective shires and MPs.

Last month I had a meeting with the CEO of the BapstistCare finding opportunity for our people to get training and employment. I’ve to meet him again early next month. Through ACTIV foundation 8 Karens got job in June 2019.

I’m planning to visit Darwin and NT in coming October to assist our community. As many know, NT and Warambool of Victoria are in need of skilled migrants with relaxed English skills. I’m trying my best in liaising with Senator Dean Smith in that issue. As you may be aware of a few Karen skilled migrants are coming this year. We will do our best so far.

Finally, being an old man with slow movement in physical and mental activities I sincerely request the team to find someone to take over my position. But I promise not to leave but always support KWA from behind the curtain.

Sincerely,

Paul Kyaw