

## Report on a ministry trip to Myanmar – June 2013

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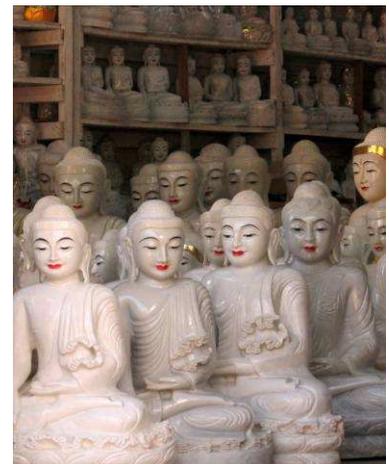
Myanmar, called Burma until 1989, is a large country – slightly larger than France, and with a population similar to that of the UK (60 million). It gained its independence in 1948, but has been under a military dictatorship for 50 years – until 2 or 3 years ago.



In 2011 we met Cin Lian Mang, a young Burmese brother who was studying theology at Tyndale Theological Seminary in Holland. During his 3 years of study, he formed part of a Christian assembly in Amsterdam. Our visit was in response to his invitation.



Br Mang belongs to a network of over 100 Brethren assemblies in Myanmar. Although conditions are difficult, they are very active in training Christian workers, evangelizing and planting new assemblies. They have a vision for growth, and they teach it, plan for it, and work towards it.



About 70% of the population is ethnically Burmese, and these have the upper hand in the country. Until now, the Gospel has had entrance mainly among the other diverse ethnic groups. Myanmar remains the most fervently Buddhist country in the world – which is clearly evident as you walk the streets: many monks and pagodas!

During the first weekend of our 10 day visit, we ministered the Word at a 10 year old congregation in Yangon, and at a new congregation east of the city. From Monday to Friday, each of us was invited to teach daily 4 one hour lessons at one of their three training centers, the South East Asia Bible College.





During the last weekend we travelled 2-3 hours west of Yangon to Pyapon. Here a new congregation began as a result of the relief work by



brothers and sisters after the Cyclone Nargis, which hit in May 2008 and killed an estimated 100.000 people. The nice new church hall in Pyapon was financed by believers from Malaysia. We were encouraged to notice the concern and mutual support among Christians in South East Asia. Together they are sharing their experience, strategies and resources, and getting good work done - without waiting for Europeans or North American believers to initiate or support.



We returned encouraged to see what the Lord is doing in the region, and happy to have had the privilege of making a minor contribution in this corner of the Lord's vast vineyard.

- Frederic and Philip

