

Mercy Teams International (MTI)



News Update

A Ministry of Operation Mobilisation in East Asia and Pacific • 2005 • Issue 1

a word from the directors



Dear Friends,



"Oh dear, what have I just eaten?"

Mercy Teams is committed to the ongoing care and training of each of our precious workers. They sometimes work in isolated situations and live beyond their natural comfort zone. During our twice-a-year staff retreat in May, our workers in Myanmar, Cambodia, Singapore and Vietnam came together to be refreshed amidst the lush tranquil surroundings of a resort in Thailand.

A highlight was the training given in puppetry skills. We hope to use the large puppets that we have purchased to teach

evangelism and health skills to the children in our ministries...and no doubt the adults will love it as well! Presentations of the country ministry reports and slides by each team in the evenings were both moving and inspiring. WOW, we sometimes felt like we were taking a journey through the book of Acts!

In this issue of MTI's Newsletter, we would like to share with everyone updates of God's blessings and the first six months of 2005.

Dave & Dawn Greenfield

a hand-UP, not a handout



MTI members in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, often ride through the streets in a tuk-tuk, searching for children not attending school. Some of these children are scavenging for rubbish in bags and bins placed outside homes and shops. They are mostly looking for tin

cans and plastics that they can recycle. The poorest of them actually eat leftovers that have been thrown out.

It is not an uncommon sight to see groups of children, mostly boys, barefooted and with matted hair, trudging along the dusty streets with sacks over their backs. These are amongst the hundreds of children who live in the slums and streets of the urban sprawl in Phnom Penh, trying to make a few dollars just to survive starvation.

One night we came upon four little boys, each carrying a sack and one of them was clutching watermelon peelings in a plastic bag. When we enquired what the peelings were for, he explained that he was taking them back for his family to eat. I was horrified to think of children eating food scavenged from a rubbish pile. We decided to find out where the children lived and made arrangements to meet again.

The next day, we paid a visit to see what could be done for this family...

It was the same sad story that we had heard many times before. The two boys had lost their parents from the Aids virus and left their province for Phnom Penh to search for relatives. However, the aunt whom they were staying with was widowed and struggling to make

ends meet for herself and two daughters. The "house" that the family had been living in for four years was a small one room shack constructed of plastic, cardboard, tin and foam boxes. None of the children were attending school.

The aunt's fifteen-year-old daughter would walk the streets from morning till night carrying a basket of watercress on her head to peddle. This was the family's only means of income. We decided to offer the girl a cleaning job at our team centre. It was a daily grind training her to use the modern electrical equipment, particularly as she had never even done a simple task like sweeping the floor as their home only had mud flooring. Although neither of us could communicate in the same language, she had a teachable spirit and I wanted to give her an opportunity to help her family.

The girl had been working for us for several weeks and it had been great to see her learning some English words, as well as the smile on her face as we encouraged her in picking up new skills. Everyday she would take a clean shower at our place, instead of bathing down at the Mekong River. We also gave her filtered water for her family to drink.

One day, she told us her sister and two cousins were going to attend school and it was very exciting just to give them stationery and shoes to do so. With her new income, she could now support five people and this enabled the family an opportunity for independent living.

Child labour is a common sight here and sadly the children seldom see the money they earned. This money usually goes to an exploitive adult or a pimp and the children are powerless to do anything about it. As a result, the children remain hungry! What they really need is not a handout, but a helping hand to lift them up from their poverty and plight.

Making Inroads Into Thai-Myanmar Jungles



"Helicopter Police airlift MTI relief goods."

MTI's humanitarian efforts towards poverty stricken families in the remote jungles along the Thai-Myanmar border literally received a lift from the Thai police.

Our work to provide relief supplies to whole villages, including pockets of believers, had been hindered by the inaccessibility of these areas to vehicles or trampers during the rainy season. This was particularly so as many of the hill tribes are hiding for fear of being attacked by belligerent Myanmar soldiers. Hence, we are especially grateful when MTI's Myanmar worker Nelson persuaded the Thai police to airlift blankets, hygiene packs, stationery, clothing and mosquito nets into the villages.

These villages, after two to three years of loving care, are now very open to the gospel.

New Storeroom In Singapore

After several years of searching and prayers by many people, we are delighted to be offered an ideal 1,100-square-foot storeroom at 10 cents per square foot!

Situated at the Loyang Industrial Estate, it is conveniently near Changi Airport and even has a sea-view. Furthermore the facility is located on the ground floor, which would spare our volunteers the past back-breaking task of



"Hard work, but hey, look at the view."

carrying heavy boxes of goods up and down the stairs. MTI hopes to occupy our new storage space after renovations in mid-July.

We are grateful to God for the existing storage space, which was provided through the generosity of a Christian businessman who allowed us to use two rooms in his warehouse for free when we were in critical need.

GoForth National Missions Conference 2005



We had an excellent time during the Singapore nation-wide missions conference from 16-18 June and the team working on the MTI booth received high praise for creativity!

We would like to thank everyone who prayed and visited us during the three days. Recruiting enquiries kept the team busy and we pray that even as the participants return home, they will keep their hearts focused towards being thrust out into the harvest fields.

NEEDED URGENTLY!

An Accountant & A Personal Assistant

The MTI team is growing rapidly and so are our financial accounting and administrative needs. Our Head Office in Singapore is actively seeking the services of an **ACCOUNTANT** and a **PERSONAL ASSISTANT** (PA) to the Directors.

An Accountant who is both experienced and qualified, and has the necessary computer skills would be most suited. The PA position requires a "people-person" who is also strong on secretarial and administrative skills, as well as

details. The PA will report directly to the regional Directors.

As these two positions are Singapore-based full-time missions, candidates should be dedicated Christians recommended by their local church and able to raise their own financial support or be self-financing. If you are an interested applicant or would like to find out more, we would certainly like to speak with you. Please contact Dave or Clarence at 6743 1889 or email for more details.

MTI Moving Info Indonesia

Since Banda Aceh was hit by the 26th December tsunami and Nias island shaken by another major earthquake three months later, MTI has been actively involved in relief work in both places. These activities included sending a medical team of two doctors and three nurses to help in the local clinics after the disaster in Nias.

Meanwhile a young Indonesian couple, Pitter and Diana, are now based in Medan and are searching for an office that will become our centre for this region of needs. Do pray with us about finding a suitable office space and the safety of our workers.

While some of our planned projects still require permission from the Indonesian government to proceed further, others are awaiting the professional skills of specialised workers.

-----indonesia news-----

Equipping Relief Helpers In Indonesia

In view of the great need for trained relief helpers, MTI also sponsored a "Trauma Counselling Course" for almost 150 members of the *Gereja Bethel Indonesia* (GBI, or Indonesian Bethel Church) in Medan.

The intensive course, which ran in May 2005, aimed to equip its participants with basic knowledge on counselling. The lively and useful sessions were conducted by Dr Frederick Toke, who is a practicing clinical psychologist and President / CEO of the Lee Community College in Singapore,

Based on the strong response from participants, MTI has already planned to organise further modules of the course in the following months. Ericsson, a GBI tsunami aid worker, was eagerly looking forward to the further instalments saying, "I want to learn how to counsel even non-Christians, so that I can also help the many Muslims in Aceh".