I. Celebrate Chinese New Year with Hacienda Heights Church
   Paul Cho <paulcho99@yahoo.com.hk> December 1:
   Chinese New Year of the Dragon will fall on January 23, 2012. We will have a Chinese New Year Celebration Dinner on January 28, 2012. We invite everyone to join in the celebration. --Weekly Newsletter and Church Bulletin for Hacienda Heights Chinese Seventh-day Adventist Church - December 03, 2011

II. When Mrs. Gulfin Was Desperately Sick on Itinerary
   Helen Bocala-Gulfin wrote the following for December 13 in "Love Our Land," the women's morning devotional book for this year:
   "Trust in Jesus -- 'Trust in him at all times, O people, pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.' Ps. 62:8 NIV
   "Crises, crises, crises everywhere! Calamities here and there. Wars, cyclones, floods, and other dreadful stories. People are homeless. They lose loved ones. Some suffer from hunger and poor health. There is much pain; physical, emotional, financial, mental, and even spiritual--because they have no hope, no one in whom to put their trust. What a disaster!
   Hopelessness! Why are most men and women so fearful? It is for lack of trust and hope. But for the faithful Christian, we have Jesus--our only hope. We don't have to be afraid; we can trust in Him.
   "When I received a call to be director of women's ministries and pastors' wives coordinator, for all of Southeast Asia, I realized I was the most fearful of women. I was afraid--afraid to talk up front, afraid to leave my garden, afraid to travel alone in places unknown to me, afraid of new cultures, afraid of failure, afraid I might get sick and die in a foreign land without my family. And it almost happened--or so it seemed.
   "I was conducting a women's leadership training in Malaysia. After administering a quiz to the participants, my head ached. I had never had such an experience before. The pain was unbearable. Two loving women's ministries leaders took me to the hospital. While on the way I threw up three times. Of course, I was afraid. I was getting weak and I thought that was my last moment, and as I'd feared, I would die in a foreign land.
   Normally my blood pressure is 110/70, but when it was checked in the hospital, it was 170/90. Too high! What's more, I was terrified. I prayed, 'Lord, please save me, forgive me, and help me to trust in You from now on. I know you called me for a purpose. Just allow me to go home. Thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.' The doctor gave me two shots and told me to rest. I felt so close to God, and He reminded me to trust in Him no matter what. When the storm raged one night on the sea, and the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, they were very afraid. And Jesus said, 'It is I; don't be afraid.'
   "The next day I flew back home to Manila, Philippines, as normal as could be. Praise God. He is our refuge. Let us trust Him."

III. MFM Conducts Pioneer Training & Annual Pioneer Meeting
   Saw Thein <sawthein2009@gmail.com> December 5:
This year the Myanmar Frontier Mission pioneer training No. 2 was conducted on November 15 to 30 in Meiktila. The four dedicated persons who are willing to serve the Lord were learning to be fitted God's work. This is a special training. During training we learned the distinctive Bible doctrines, the Spirit of Prophecy, the history of Christian Churches and Adventist Church, Daniel and the Revelation, the church growth strategy. The commitment was given by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ in order to implement our tasks. All of us devoted our lives to the Lord and during three years to plant seven churches where in the targeted areas.

The MFM Twelve Annual Pioneer Meeting was followed on December 1 to December 3 and a total of 18 attended the meeting. At the end of our program on Sabbath the communion service was offered by Pr. Nitoot from Central Myanmar Mission. We line up to conduct the pioneer training three times in 2012 (April, August, November). By next time we plan to add three more persons and to conduct the three weeks training at the same place. Not only in the classroom but also practical in the fields so the chosen seven would enlighten Myanmar with gospel of last warning message to all the tribes and ethnic groups in Myanmar.

IV. Quezon City Church Celebrating Anniversary
Linda dela Paz <erltpaz@yahoo.com> November 28:
Our church, the SDA church of Sherwood Hgts. subdivision, Pasong Tamo, Quezon City will celebrate its 16th anniversary this first Sabbath of December 2011. Please include us in your prayers. This is a house church attended by more or less 60 believers. Our youth are actively participating in singing to brethren whom we missed their fellowship. We just finish a Hope and Health Seminar; 12 souls were baptized last Sabbath, followed by a free dental extraction November 27 serving the less fortunate neighborhood.
This is an independent ministry offered by Bro. Robert C. dela Paz, our church elder. God bless.

V. ADRA Bangladesh Holds Strategic Planning Session
Elidon Bardhi <elidon@adrabd.org> November 21:
[Relayed Ken Flemmer <Ken.Flemmer@adra.org>]
ADRA Bangladesh conducted its strategic plan session during 24-28 October 2011, in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Key staff member, representatives from constituency, donors, ADRA Asia Regional Office and other stakeholders participated in defining the future of ADRA in Bangladesh.
ADRA Bangladesh's vision is to bring positive changes for communities through effective partnership.
This will be reached through the following strategic goals:
1. ADRA Bangladesh's programs bring sustainable changes for lives and society 2. ADRA Bangladesh's effective communication builds confidence and strengthens partnerships 3. ADRA Bangladesh ensures effective and efficient support for its operations
This new strategic plan was made possible by the contribution of all participants and is task oriented, simple and relevant to the needs of ADRA in Bangladesh. This plan provides a framework to take ADRA to another level and become an excellent organization in what we do.
On behalf of ADRA Bangladesh we thank each of the participants for their valuable input, without which this plan could not have been possible.

VI. ADRA Mongolia's Rural Economic Advancement Project
Ariuntungalag M. <admin-officer@adra.org.mn> November 22:
Relayed by Ken Flemmer
ADRA Mongolia is implementing the Rural Economic Advancement Project starting in September 2011 funded by European Union, ADRA Germany and ADRA Czech. The project is implemented in Selenge & Zavkhan provinces with to improve the living standard of population and to develop the skills of local cooperatives.
Our first activity conducted was "Cooperative Peer Educator's Preparation" training in close collaboration with Cooperatives Training and Information Center in Ulaanbaatar.
The training was organized between 10-14 of September 2011. Which involved the project team members and 16 cooperative representatives from Selenge and Zavkhan provinces, and through this training, they learned about the primary knowledge of a cooperative.
In order to achieve our goal, we are going to support the cooperatives based on their needs to improve partnerships among the cooperatives, expand and study on product marketing, empower local financial organizations that support cooperatives, provide the professional counseling and services and provide the specific information as needed.

Moreover, with purpose of the project, we are going to collaborate with government offices, small business office and cooperative information training center of those provinces.

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VII. SULADS Mission Story: "Wrestling With Spirits"

SULADS Newsletter <sulads@suladsnnewsletter.org> by Daryl Famisaran, Misoloksolok Mission School

"Sir Daryl! Datu (chief) Asang has decided to be baptized," Sir Arthur gladly reported. He did not join the last baptism because the Pastor, who was not a SULADS missionary, did not speak Manobo and he couldn't understand Cebuan. He didn't like that.

"I have some things to surrender to Datu Bowngit (chief talkative bird), Daryl Famisaran, before I get baptized," Chief Asang said. I believed these things were his amulets, charms and bits of assorted things he used in attending to patients as he calls on the spirits in the woods to help him heal the sick in his community.

I did not hesitate to go. This chief, estimated to be 85 years old, was already too weak to hike to the nearby river. He wanted to be baptized before he couldn't make it anymore. Excitement filled me imagining that this chief especially sent for me to baptize him. Though he alone would be baptized this time, it would be worth my hike of four hours crossing rivers and climbing mountains.

Reaching the village that afternoon, I right away went to see the Chief.

His black teeth glowed in his sweet smiles when he saw me. We hugged, and he hugged me again so tight as if to say what took you so long? He then called his people to gather in the plaza around a suspended log and he started beating the log as the other dancers joined him in beating the log welcoming me. He asked me to join the merriment in dancing and we enjoyed it. We had worship that evening in the village hut hall in the dark and he was there present with all the villagers.

I was told that some Baptist members and a pastor had been there and told him that the Adventist's Sabbath was no longer applicable this time as it was abolished on the cross. So I expounded on Creation and the Sabbath. I saw him nodding affirmatively. We parted that evening with the reminder of the most important appointment in the morning-his baptism. He was excited.

We planned that evening that the whole class of two hundred would have no class that Monday morning just to witness Chief Asang's baptism. I wore my chief's attire just as I do every time I baptize these mountain tribes and most especially since I would be baptizing a Chief. As the children were having the flag ceremony, I went ahead to prepare the chief. He was there combing his long hair as he has just taken a bath in the river. "Oh! the chief is quite ready now," I said to myself. "So are we ready now, Chief for the holy bath?" I reminded.

"I'm sorry, Chief Talkative Bird, but I'm not yet ready this time!"

What!? I was shocked! But I just pretended it was alright. This is what I came here for I mused. WHY? WHY? I could not understand this.

"Why chief? What do you mean not this time? This is what I came here for," I asked.

He then got his bag full of bits and pieces of his charms and amulets. Then out came shiny shells, a certain kind of seed which he explained is an extra ordinary seed with powers, rusty iron which he said floats on the water, a crystal ball as big as a marble and a rusty needle which he explained floats also on the water. I made my camera ready to take some pictures of him with his charms, but he said, "NO PLEASE!" I right away put my camera down so as not to upset him. I understand that this was a big "No No" according to culture. I then recalled his dream about the narrow road and the wide road where he saw his people and himself on the narrow road that led to hell with a dark bottomless pit and the narrow road where he saw the SULADS teachers and his children in the village joining worship on the road to heaven.

He said, "Is there no other way to heaven?"

I said, "There is only one way-the narrow road only-and this way is Jesus."

"Not yet this time maybe, Chief," he explained. "It is okay for me to have my people get baptized first..."

"But I will not be baptized this time yet either," his wife butted in.

I understood and I dared not force him anymore. A moment later the students and the teachers were already there ready to go to the river. I was happy that they had prepared some others who decided to be baptized. I asked Chief
Asang to say some few words of encouragements to his subjects to be baptized. He did! "This is the narrow road full of thorns and snares," he began, "but this is leading to life eternal. Be faithful as you go. I will follow later."

I baptized eighteen of them that sunny morning and I said it was still worth my hike. Later that day I learned that, some two days before I came, Chief Asang visited his Balite Tree where he used to offer sacrifices to his spirit friends. I then understood that he was still in a battle of WRESTLING WITH SPIRITS.

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