



## **Devastating Earthquake in Myanmar: A Call for Solidarity**

### **Statement from Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Chiang Mai Campus, and the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB)**

A severe earthquake measuring between 7.7 and 8.2 in magnitude, with a depth of approximately 10 km, struck near Mandalay, the second-largest city in Myanmar, according to reports from the Meteorological Department. The earthquake occurred at approximately 1:20 PM on March 28, 2025, and its tremors were felt in multiple areas of Thailand, including Bangkok. Additionally, more than 260 aftershocks, ranging in magnitude from 1.0 to 5.9, have been recorded.

Mandalay is a major center for education, religion, and culture in Myanmar. It is home to the Kuthodaw Pagoda, also known as the Maha Lokamarazin Pagoda, located at the foot of Mandalay Hill. Surrounding the pagoda are 729 small shrines housing stone inscriptions of the Pali Tipitaka in Burmese script, which were recognized by UNESCO as a "Memory of the World" in 2013. Additionally, Mandalay is close to Bagan, an ancient city that was the capital of the first Burmese kingdom from the 9th to 13th centuries. During its peak, over 10,000 temples, pagodas, and monasteries were built across the Bagan plains, and more than 2,200 remain today. UNESCO designated Bagan as a World Heritage Site in 2019.

This earthquake has caused extensive damage to important historical and religious sites, including temples, mosques, commercial buildings, residential structures, infrastructure, and public utilities. Many survivors have been left without shelter or food and are desperately searching for missing loved ones among the ruins. Large areas remain without electricity, internet access, phone signals, or fuel supplies. Hospitals are overwhelmed with the injured, with patients spilling onto the streets.

Critically, the death toll has surpassed 2,700, with over 4,500 reported injured, and these numbers are expected to rise. At the time of the disaster, around 180 Buddhist monks were taking a Tipitaka examination at a temple in Mandalay when the building collapsed. Only 21 monks survived. Meanwhile, during Friday prayers, at least 60 mosques in Mandalay and the Sagaing region collapsed, killing at least 700 Muslim worshippers. A kindergarten in Mandalay also collapsed, trapping 70 teachers and children aged 2–7, with an estimated 40 fatalities. An orphanage in Ywar Thit Kone

village near Sagaing collapsed, killing a 9-year-old girl and injuring several other children, leaving survivors without shelter. Crematoriums in Mandalay are overwhelmed, with one site burning up to 300 bodies per day. As a result, locals have been forced to cremate loved ones on the streets. The extreme heat, exceeding 40°C, has caused corpses to decompose rapidly, raising concerns about potential disease outbreaks.

Earthquakes remain an unpredictable and silent natural disaster. It is the collective responsibility of humanity to mitigate the destruction caused by earthquakes by advancing building technology to withstand tremors, similar to Japan's continuous efforts in earthquake-resistant architecture and disaster prevention knowledge.

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Chiang Mai Campus, and the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) express their deepest condolences to the victims of this earthquake in both Myanmar and Thailand. We extend our support to survivors, their families, and all those affected, wishing them strength to overcome this tragedy. We also encourage efforts to develop technology that can reduce earthquake-related damages in the future.

We invite everyone to join university executives, faculty, staff, and students of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Chiang Mai Campus, along with members of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), in a meditation and merit-making session dedicated to the deceased and to sending strength to those affected. This event will take place on 8 April 2025, at 10.00 - 11.00 AM. (Bangkok Time) at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Chiang Mai Campus, Pa Miang Subdistrict, Doi Saket District, Chiang Mai Province.

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Chiang Mai Campus  
International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB)

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