

For Immediate Release
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**BURMA SUPPORTERS VIGIL AND FUNDRAISE FOR CYCLONE VICTIMS AND
ASK SPEAKER PELOSI TO PUSH FOR FINAL PASSAGE
OF SANCTIONS BILL AGAINST BRUTAL BURMA'S JUNTA**

When: Friday, May 9, 2008 4-8pm ** Press conference at 4pm. ** Speakers at 6pm
Where: San Francisco Federal Building, 450 Golden Gate Avenue,
Visuals: Burmese monks and Burma supporters, meditation, signs, music, prayer & collection for Burmese cyclone victims

What: The Burmese American Democratic Alliance (BADA), the Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF) and other Burma supporters will hold a rally and vigil on May 9 to spotlight the death and disaster that Cyclone Nargis left in its wake in Burma. Compounding the suffering of 46 years of military rule, the cyclone has left a devastating legacy in this already impoverished country.

This vigil will also highlight two other concerns of Burma supporters:

1. The scheduled May 10 referendum in which Burmese will vote on a “new constitution”, which gives sweeping power to the military. It is thought that no matter what the actual vote, the regime, which will allow no international observers, will claim a “Yes” victory, giving them constitutional control.
2. The Burma Democracy Promotion Act of 2007, which was passed 5 months ago by Congress, is stalled in conference.

“The world should be truly alarmed that on the heels of one of the largest natural disasters, the military regime is still using its energy and resources to ensure a favorable outcome in its sham referendum instead of focusing on helping the hundreds of thousands of cyclone victims,” says Nyunt Than, president of the Burmese American Democratic Alliance. Five days later, Bay Area Burmese remain unable to contact their families in country and fear for their safety.

In the aftermath of the storm, the ever-present military, which immediately cracked down on peaceful monk-led protests during the Saffron Revolution last fall, was nowhere to be found. More than 25,000 deaths are reported, tens of thousands missing, and hundreds of thousands are without food, shelter and water. Some say the death toll could rise to as high as 100,000. The junta says the election will be held in most of Burma, but the hardest hit areas will vote at a later date.

Supporters are concerned that assistance will not be distributed evenly. “In order to help those with the greatest need, the process must be transparent,” says Than.

Burma, which has gone from the “rice bowl of Asia” to one of its poorest nations with malnutrition at alarming rates, may be pushed to the brink with this disaster. Exiled Burmese wonder if this will push the Burmese to further action against their corrupt government. In the lead-up to the election, the regime was intensifying the crackdowns and protests had erupted in several Burmese cities. Hundreds of people had been beaten, threatened and detained

BADA is working to make sure that all monies donated to help Burma are used for its intended purpose and will be accepting donations at the May 9th rally and at www.badasf.org. Specify “for cyclone victims” and 100% of your donations will go to help the victims of Cyclone Nargis.

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Burmese American Democratic Alliance (BADA) – www.badasf.org
Buddhist Peace Fellowship – www.bpf.org
US Campaign for Burma - www.uscampaignforburma.org
Sasana Moli – www.sasanamoli.org