

MYANMAR TIMES

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**PAGE****8**

PHOTO: YU YU

A woman prepares food above an open drain carrying wastewater from factories in the Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone to the Hlaing River. Despite Yangon City Development Committee claims that factories are responding to warnings to tackle the issue, Yangon's wastewater problem shows no signs of abating.

NEWS 3**National consultations planned for land policy**

Land utilisation committee releases draft and prepares to hold meetings in all 14 states and regions over the next month – a move that has drawn praise from civil society groups.

NEWS 7**Victoria Hospital faces scrutiny after death**

The Myanmar Medical Council will consider whether to examine a complaint against a prominent private hospital following the death of a baby earlier this month.

NEWS 16**The quiet revolutionary**

A chance meeting with a sex therapist inspired Daw Htar Htar to form an organisation to broach a rarely discussed topic: female sexuality.

INVESTIGATION 18-19**Cheated sailors languish in Malaysia**

Hundreds of Myanmar workers have been forced to take up odd jobs in a Malaysian port after agencies charged them thousands of dollars for a berth on a cargo ship that never materialised.

BUSINESS 24**Rice export halt hits domestic sales hard**

A dramatic fall in rice exports to China following the closure of border trade is wreaking havoc with domestic markets – and could drive some farmers off the land, according to industry groups.

Constitution debate fires up

More than 100 MPs register to discuss a report submitted by the constitution amendment committee ahead of a vote that will set the tone for an amendment bill next year, according to members. **NEWS 3**



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Page 2

THE INSIDER: The local lowdown & best of the web

DPRK goes down to Qatar
The finals of the U19 Asia Football cup between Qatar and North Korea played out in Yangon last week, with Qatar taking it home 1-0. North Korea had the ball for approximately 90 percent of the game, but

managed to miss 100pc of the 20 or so shots they had at the goal. Just a handful of the crowd was rooting for Qatar, whose victory was met with polite applause and cheering – but it paled in comparison to the crowd’s decibel output

any time the Hermit Kingdom had possession. It was quite something to be in a stadium with thousands of people yelling “NORTH KOREA, NORTH KOREA!” Indeed, it seems they have quite the fanbase here. *Page 2* spotted a young woman wearing an “I heart North Korea” t-shirt, which was a strong look. Another group carried a huge DPRK flag. But all the cheering and flag-waving was to no avail: Qatar managed to score, and the game ended with some very bummed-out-looking North Koreans sitting on the pitch staring down at the ground.

Plains of romance
Bagan is the number-one place in the world to pop the question, according to an article (for want of a better word) posted by Lonely Planet last week. It beat out Paris, New York, the Amalfi Coast, a Namibian nature reserve, Norway, Udaipur, the Arches National Park, Principe and São Tomé, as well as Antarctica. “Today, the plain around Bagan is still dotted with more than 2000 [temples]. Climb to the top of one together (Lawkaoushaung is a great choice) and watch the rising sun turn the dark landscape into a vivid golden canvas eloquently brushed with silhouettes. It’s an incredible sight to witness, and it’s a perfect time to pop the question,” the article gushed. Y’know, that or Antarctica.

Unsolicited advice corner
To Jason, who posted on Yangon Expat Connection, the digital hub for white wine enthusiasts: You asked “Given higher criminality in the city and also a recent mishap

‘Whether he was a journalist or an officer from an armed group, this is a human rights violation. We need to find out the truth about what happened.’

Interim Press Council member Zaw Thet Htway
on the announcement that journalist Aung Kyaw Naing (ParGyi) has been shot and killed by the Tatmadaw

we experienced, where to purchase mace (pepper spray) in Yangon?”
Well, Jason: As is usually the case with any sentence that begins with “where can I get...”, the answer is “Bangkok”. You’re welcome.

In brief:
50th St standup comedy night “deeply unfunny, a hostage situation” says one attendee, while another says he would “rather join ISIS than sit through that again”

Next week:
Local man describes miserable creature that lives on the corner of his block as “more of a walking prolapse than a dog”
“Gangnam Style” not going anywhere, as analysts say the song will remain popular in Myanmar until the singularity in 2034

Overheard near Sule:
“Are women *allowed* to drive here?”
– Tourist to tour guide

Once was Burma...

From the Pansodan Gallery archives



Golden Hammer Journal, Harvest edition, 1971



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Thinking about fashion...
Yoon Mi Mi Kyaw
for *NOW!* Magazine.
Photo: Ye Htut

Style Statement
NOW!

Two different viewpoints on proportional representation, via DVB Debate.

“Under the PR system, we can get more minority groups’ representatives and voices in Parliament, since the seats are in proportion with the number of votes.”
Aung Zin, National Democratic Front (NDF) MP

“A PR system, at this point in Burma’s transition, would further institutionalise already strong interest groups like Buddhists, cronies and veterans by ensuring their place in parliament while weakening their opponents. These interest groups do not seek compromise, they seek power.”
Dr Nyo Tun - international consultant



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More than 100 MPs set to debate constitution report



EI EI TOE LWIN HTOO THANT

DEBATE over the controversial sections of the 2008 constitution that bar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from the presidency and give the military a veto over reform looks set to intensify, after the committee set up to review the constitution reported to hluttaw last week.

Parliament must now act on the report of the 31-member committee, which is essentially a composition of proposed amendments submitted by various stakeholders, including the military, the National League for Democracy and the Union Solidarity and Development Party.

A member of committee, who asked not to be named, said 100 MPs had registered to discuss the report, which was submitted on October 22.

Parliament will decide on each section through a vote and the committee will write a bill based on the results. This will then be submitted and voted on again, he said.

The two thorniest problems relate to sections 59 and 436, which govern eligibility for the presidency and changing the constitution. Amendments require a 75 percent majority vote in parliament, in which the military is guaranteed 25pc of the seats and therefore veto powers.

The National League for Democracy and its leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, have called for the abolition of section 59, which states that no citizen



Thura U Shwe Mann and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Photos: AFP, Boothe

married to a foreigner or with children who are foreign citizens – as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's – is eligible to be president.

The military has brushed off NLD objections that no such restriction appeared in the 1947 and 1974 constitutions, as well as NLD proposals to lower the barrier for constitutional change to two-thirds, or even 50pc. The ruling USDP has expressed no specific view on this provision, stating only that it could be considered at an appropriate time.

One possible new cause for controversy lies in a military proposal in the committee's report to enhance the role of the National Security and Defence Council. NLD MP U Min Thu described this as "very difficult to understand".



The NDSC comprises 11 members led by the president, and two vice presidents, the speakers of parliament, the commander-in-chief of the defence services and his deputy, and the ministers of defence, home affairs and border affairs.

Its sweeping powers include advising the president on declaring a state of emergency, support for a presidential amnesty, advising on questions of defence, security, the rule of law and peace issues, and the suspension of parliament under certain conditions.

Meanwhile, the military is also proposing that the president should have the power to abolish both houses of parliament in the event of a "loss of checks and balances" among parliament, the president and the judiciary,

and to call an election within 90 days.

On October 22, the day the committee submitted its report, military MP Brigadier General Tint San unveiled a separate report with suggestions for the preservation of the checks and balances among the three branches. The first report to be submitted by a military representative since the parliament was set up in early 2011, it criticises "weaknesses and delay" in the executive, and implies that the legislature fails to understand the nature of government when enacting laws. The report also warns against "rivalry", while urging "positive competition" among the branches.

USDP representative U Hla Swe, a former military officer, said this smacked of dictatorship, while another USDP member, U Khin Maung Yi, said, "We don't agree with the military's suggestion, but the report has not yet been approved. These are just suggestions, which we will have to discuss again in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw."

U Saw Taw Palae of the Kayin People's Party said they were satisfied with the suggestions concerning ethnic peoples, especially on sharing power, "though we didn't get 100pc of what we asked for".

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann said the report would be approved during this session, perhaps by November 21, and urged MPs to discuss it in a spirit of goodwill. "If so, I believe there will be good results for the state and the people," he said.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi told reporters after the hluttaw session, "We are now analysing the report, and then our members will take part in the discussions in parliament."

New safety body aim to halve road deaths

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ROAD safety chiefs have announced a goal of cutting in half the death toll from accidents, U Lian Cin Mang, director of the Road Transport Administration Department, told *The Myanmar Times* on October 23.

The National Road Safety Council, which was established on June 24, has announced five objectives to be achieved by the year 2020, including reducing road deaths by half from last year's figure of 3731.

The other goals include cutting the rate of fatal accidents by half, from 9.26 per 1000 motor vehicle collisions in 2013; encouraging an increase of 90pc in the number of motorcyclists wearing helmets, and of 70pc in the number of drivers and passengers wearing safety belts; and reducing the number of unlicensed drivers.

The council is chaired by Vice President U Nyan Tun, with the ministers for home affairs and railway and transportation serving as co-vice chairs.

U Lyan Kyint Man said more traffic control centres, traffic lights and security cameras were needed in order to cut deaths from road accidents and to relieve congestion. "Most roads in our country are not adequate yet. I think deaths and injuries from traffic accidents will considerably decline if we use high-tech transportation systems with high-tech equipment like Japan. We need government support, as well as assistance from the private sector and international donors," he said.

Most traffic accidents involve motorcycles. According to figures from January to June, road accidents involving motorcycles accounted for 3237 cases, with 4982 injuries and 843 deaths.

Police Lieutenant Colonel Aung Ko Oo of Mandalay Region police told a road safety workshop on October 22 that there should be a regular program of checking vehicles' brakes and steering.

- Translation by Zar Zar Soe

Govt open to public suggestion for drafting new land policy

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THE government has launched a public consultation process on its draft national land use policy, three years after the two land laws were enacted by parliament.

The Land Use Allocation and Scrutinising Committee led by Vice President U Nyan Tun released the draft policy on October 18. The committee will hold discussions in all regions and states on the draft and collect feedback from civil society organisations and individuals, a

member said last week.

"We will start regional-level discussions in November. The discussion process will take the entire month," said U Aye Maung Sein, a director in the Settlements and Land Records Department and committee member.

Land rights activists and civil society groups welcomed the government's willingness to conduct widespread consultations.

"I praise [the government] for doing open consultations on a [land] policy – it's the first time we've seen this," said Daw Ohnmar Khine, coordinator of the

Food Security Working Group, a network comprising more than 60 NGOs.

The 41-page draft includes sections on changing land use, granting concession on or the lease of state owned lands, procedures relating to land acquisition, and compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation for confiscated land.

The policy is drafted based around the principle – contained in the 2008 constitution – that all land is owned by the state.

U Aye Maung Sein said any suggestions to the contrary could be ignored.

"Whether we accept public suggestions depends on how much they suit the basic principles [of the policy]. If suggestions are not suitable then we may ignore them," he said.

When the draft policy is approved, the committee will proceed to writing a national land law bill and submit it to the parliament. A separate consultation process will take place in parliament.

The draft policy outlines the formation of a National Land Use Council, which will be chaired by a vice president and include several Union ministers and state and region chief ministers.

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2015 ELECTION

Parties told to expel temporary citizen members by January

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POLITICAL parties will have a little over two months to ensure they comply with new rules that ban them from accepting non-citizens as members, Union Election Commission chair U Tin Aye said last week.

Parties have been told to inform the UEC of any changes to their central executive committee or membership list by January 16, he said, adding that parties found to be in breach of the law could be abolished. "Only citizens can set up political parties. The [UEC] will give two months for you to check your members. If you have any changes, let us know again," U Tin Aye said.

After receiving the member list, the commission will have it checked by the Immigration Department.

If the UEC receives a complaint

that a party has accepted a non-citizen as a member it will conduct an investigation, U Tin Aye said.

"We already have a 15-member committee to investigate complaints. If a party is found to have non-citizens, we will warn them to remove that member as the first step. If they refuse we will definitely revoke their registration."

Amendments to the Political Parties Registration Law were signed by President U Thein Sein on September 30, four days after they were approved by parliament.

Under the previous version of the law, all citizens and "temporary certificate holders" are allowed to start or join a political party. The amendment, however, enables only full citizens to be central executive committee members - of which a party must have 15 - and bars temporary citizens from holding party membership.

As *The Myanmar Times* has previously reported, the change will most affect the three parties formed by politicians who identify as Rohingya. Most hold temporary identification documents - known as white cards - rather than the Citizenship Scrutiny Cards issued to citizens.

The amendments were proposed by the Rakhine National Party. Leader U Aye Maung said last week the RNP will "definitely be watching" whether other parties comply with the changes.

"We will probably send a complaint to the UEC if we have evidence" that another party has non-citizens as members, he said.

But he also questioned whether the UEC should be taking a more proactive role in rooting out non-citizens from registered political parties. "The UEC has a duty to check each party's members. It doesn't make sense that

they will only take action when they receive a complaint," he said.

A spokesperson for the National Development and Peace Party described the amendments as "unfair" but said it would do its best to comply. He said many of those who hold white cards would be eligible for citizenship if the government implemented the 1982 Citizenship Law correctly.

"We have no choice because we are the minority," said Mohammad Salim. "They should not decide whether some one has the right to participate in politics based on citizenship alone. We [Muslims holding white cards] are eligible for citizenship according to the law."

The RNP has submitted amendments to two additional elections laws, one of which will strip white card holders of the right to vote, including more than 1 million people in Rakhine State. It remains unclear, however, if the

law will gain majority support in parliament, particularly given concerns it could dramatically inflame tensions in Rakhine State.

In its latest report, *Myanmar: The Politics of Rakhine State*, released on October 22, the International Crisis Group warned that it "would be a highly controversial move, and in Rakhine State could be incendiary".

"The Rohingya see their ability to vote as their last remaining connection to politics and means of influence. Without this, there will be no Rohingya representatives in the legislature ... It would be hard for the Rohingya community to avoid the conclusion that politics had failed them," it said.

But U Tin Aye said he expected the amendment to pass.

"It is up to the parliament to decide," U Tin Aye said last week. "I think they will change it soon."

Voter list project to begin this week

A YEAR-LONG voter registration program will begin this week, the Union Election Commission (UEC) has announced.

The four-stage process will kick off with the digitalisation of voter registration in selected Yangon townships on October 27, and will be progressively extended to the rest of the country over the next three phases. The second phase, from November to January 2015, will take place in Mandalay, Taunggyi, Patheingyi, Nay Pyi Taw and other large cities.

The third phase, in the rest of the country, will be carried out from January to March 2015, and any remaining areas will be covered in the final phase, from February to May 2015.

Meanwhile, between January and July voter lists from across the country will be collated and entered into a central database, with the announcement of the final voter lists in October 2015.

Civil society organisations have been invited to take part in the project following implementation of a pilot to improve electoral rolls in three townships in July and August. - *Lun Min Mang*

UEC extends campaign period but no let-up on rally restrictions

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THE Union Election Commission has promised to extend the election campaign period from 30 to 60 days at the request of opposition parties but insisted that other restrictions on campaigning are needed to prevent unrest.

Chair U Tin Aye revealed the change during a meeting with political parties in Yangon on October 21. "I will give you all 60 days for the election campaign period in the 2015 general election, as you requested," he said.

The 30-day campaign period was introduced through Directive 1/2014, which was issued by the commission in July.

The directive also put in place tight restrictions on campaigning and prompted an angry reaction from opposition party leaders. Some warned that the directive meant the election could be neither free nor fair and even said they would consider boycotting unless it was amended.

The following month, representatives from the National League for Democracy and five ethnic parties met U Tin Aye and urged him to extend the campaign period to 60 days, on the



Union Election Commission chair U Tin Aye speaks to reporters after meeting civil society organisations in Yangon on October 20. Photo: Yu Yu

grounds that one month was not long enough to campaign in remote parts of the country.

U Tin Aye said last week the 30-day limit had been put in place to prevent disruption during by-elections that had been scheduled for this year but were cancelled last month.

"I set 30 days for the by-elections, not for 2015. I didn't want to have any negative impact on ASEAN events

which would coincide with the by-elections. Now I will change it to 60 days for the 2015 elections," he said.

Political parties welcomed the decision but said they were still concerned at other restrictions that, if they remain in place, could damage the credibility of the election.

These require candidates to seek permission from the township election commission office before holding

any campaign events, providing the proposed list of speakers, the location and number of participants. These details would be vetted by both the commission and the regional government and permission must be sought at least 15 days in advance.

During the meeting, some parties asked the UEC to drop the rules requiring them to seek permission for campaign activities.

But U Tin Aye said the rules were necessary to prevent riots during the election campaign and criticised parties for "being against whatever I do".

He said the commission's main concern was that parties would misuse race or religion for political gain and it would not try to stop other political activities.

"If [someone] complains to us that a party won by using race or religion I will decide [the complaint] according to the law."

Political party leaders, however, said the rules gave the commission too much discretion.

"We did not have these kinds of restriction during the 1990 elections. All candidates could go anywhere," said U Khin Maung Swe, head of the National Democratic Force. "It would be better if we just need to inform the UEC rather than seek permission."

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NGOs push for child rights ombudsman

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AN ombudsman should be appointed to safeguard children's rights, according to Save the Children International, which last week hosted a Child Rights Governance workshop with civil society organisations, religious leaders and the media.

Senior adviser Brynjar Nilsen, of Save the Children Norway, told participants that such an appointment would guarantee attention to children's rights.

"We hope the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission will establish a specific commissioner for children's rights in 2018 or 2019," he said, adding, "We see our role as offering technical support and facilitating dialogue with child groups to support their capacity to monitor children's rights."

The ombudsman would be an independent institution for the protection and monitoring of children's rights, working within the human rights commission. He or she would take the initiative in monitoring children's living conditions, as well as legislation, policy and practices related to children, and take up individual complaints with the power to investigate. The ombudsman would

also raise awareness, document, discuss, criticise and make recommendations, but could not adopt laws or implement policies, rescind the decisions of other authorities, or enforce recommendations.

"The ombudsman is a messenger from the people to the government," said Mr Nilsen.

U Khin Mg Tun of Kayah Phue Baptist Association said Myanmar's political changes had created opportunities to strengthen children's rights.

"We have always been engaged in caring for children's welfare, but now we can contribute to child rights governance," he said. "At the same time, we can only work in our specific [geographical] area. It is important that the government improves policies, which cover all children around the country."

Participants in the workshop said the aim would be both to support and, if necessary, put pressure on the authorities to make a reality of children's rights and to facilitate a vibrant civil society, and to hold the authorities accountable when they failed to do so.

Daw Sandar Win, of Save the Children's Yangon office, said they would be working more with the media to raise awareness on child rights.

Pyin Oo Lwin accused opposes ve

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A FARMERS' rights advocate who stands accused of disturbing the peace through a solo protest in May told a Pyin Oo Lwin courtroom on October 20 that shifting his case to Mandalay would hamper his defence.

"The plaintiff is from Pyin Oo Lwin. The witnesses are also from Pyin Oo Lwin. And I am also from Pyin Oo Lwin," U Zaw Win said, citing sections of the Code of Criminal Procedure that state a case should be tried where the alleged offence was committed.

"If we need witnesses for the case, we must present residents from this town. Their desire to move to another court is to block me from having witness for my case," U Zaw Win added at what was his seventh court appearance to date.

According to Pyin Oo Lwin township court, the venue change has been proposed for safety reasons, and to avoid public unrest.

U Zaw Win is assisting farmers in more than 200 land dispute cases in the area, which has become a hotbed of unrest due to large-scale confiscations over recent decades. Many have attended his court hearings, carrying black umbrellas with the word "free" written on them.

He faces three charges relating to disturbing the peace after a May 29 solo march in which he protested the lack of response to his complaints about impropriety in the judiciary.

No decision has yet been made on the venue change. He will appear again in Pyin Oo Lwin Township Court November 3.

- Translation by Thiri Min Htun



U Zaw Win arrives at Pyin Oo Lwin Township Court on October 20. Photo: Si Thu Lwin

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Medical Council to review Victoria Hospital complaint

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Daw Nway Wah Wah Latt said at a press conference last week that no doctor had been present when she gave birth prematurely at the hospital.

The Myanmar Times tried several times to contact Victoria Hospital but

The case is the latest in a string of malpractice complaints levelled against Myanmar's private health

Dr Ba Shwe, a retired medical superintendent from Meiktila General Hospital, said the council should investigate why the child specialist needed to transfer the baby to Yankin Children's Hospital. He said the death certificate indicated the baby had suffered a traumatic injury at birth.

50

Amount of compensation Daw Nway Wah Wah Latt's family requested from Victoria Hospital

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A woman in Hlaing township carries her child past a drain that residents say contains wastewater runoff from a nearby military-run textile factory. Photo: Yu Yu

No easy solutions to city's wastewater problems

YCDC insists it has wastewater under control – but residents and factory owners say that's not the case



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EACH day, more than 1.2 million gallons of industrial wastewater passes by – and sometimes beneath – the homes of Hlaing township's 13th ward, discharged from a nearby military-run textile and garment factory. The water in the ward's drains is dark and inky, and a chemical smell wafts through the air as it flows slowly into nearby Thiri Nwe Creek.

For more than 50 years, the factory has been discharging its waste into the creek. The ward was created shortly afterward by municipal authorities to relieve congestion elsewhere in the city – but the pollution has made life only barely tolerable for residents.

When they come into contact with the contaminated water and soil, their skin becomes itchy. The pollution in the air corrodes the corrugated iron they use on the walls and roof of their homes – they even blame the fumes for damaging their electrical appliances and steel cooking pots.

“We always have to repair our electrical items,” said U Maung Maung Sein, who has lived in 13th ward's Thiri Myaing 10 Street for about 40 years.

“But the most damage is to the roof of our homes. The chemical in the water makes holes in the roof – we have to change it every three years,” he said, adding that he believed this was from the chemicals in the air.

For decades they have been complaining to the authorities, with little result. U Maung Maung Sein said their appeals were always rebuffed because the factory was run by the military.

“We told to our township administrator to solve this problem but we

did not hear anything from him yet,” he said. “There is no change. We have to suffer and nobody is interested in fixing the problem.”

Some change may be coming. Ward administrator U Soe Win said that for two years he tried to raise the issue with other departments and got nowhere. Finally, he took it to the local Yangon Region Hluttaw representative, U Than Naing.

“We sent many complaint letters to the factory and [Yangon City Development Committee] but they didn't pay any attention,” U Soe Win said. “However, after the region hluttaw representative raised the issue, we got the chance to meet with YCDC and the factory.”

He said a factory representative, Major Thant Zin Aung, admitted the untreated water was being dumped and promised to install a treatment system. “They said they will do it next year, but haven't started yet.”

However, Major Than Zin Aung said last week that the wastewater treatment facilities had already been installed in the factory eight months ago, and the water was instead being dumped into the Thamine River so it would not pass through residential areas.

“We only put safe water into the Thiri Nwe Creek,” he said.

Asked about the strong chemical smell in the area, he said it was unlikely to disappear but did not indicate that untreated water was being released. “People misunderstand us,” he said. “We don't throw away the water any more. YCDC already checked our factory.”

The military-run textile plant is one of more than 3400 factories in Yangon, according to YCDC figures. The committee insists, however, that only 188 produce industrial wastewater.

U Aung Myint Maw, assistant chief engineer in the Pollution Control and

Cleansing Department, said the committee has conducted several inspections of factories that produce waste water, starting in 2012. If they find the factories do not have treatment facilities, they warn the owners to install them. After three warnings the factory can be closed down – but only one factory has been closed for this reason, in 2012.

He insisted that all except four had done so – and these did not because they were still under construction when the inspection took place.

But U Aung Kyaw Oo from Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone's management committee said the comments did not reflect the reality on the ground.

3400

Number of factories in Yangon,
according to YCDC

He said millions of gallons of industrial waste water from the zone are dumped into the Hlaing and Pan Hlaing rivers each day, and factory owners have neither the knowledge nor the desire to install wastewater treatment plants.

“We do not have a clear definition of wastewater and we cannot control water pollution in this industrial zone. I know one or two factories that have installed wastewater treatment systems because they are foreign-owned but most local factories do not use it,” he said.

At the same time, YCDC enforcement is weak and breaches are normally resolved through “negotiation”

rather than punitive action.

In what would appear to be an acknowledgement that wastewater is a continuing problem, YCDC officials say they will conduct further inspections from next month to get a clearer picture of what is being dumped into the city's waterways. These inspections will test for the pH level, biochemical oxygen demand, total and suspended solids, and more.

But the committee's approach has done little to endear it to factory owners. U Aung Kyaw Oo said YCDC has not given factories clear guidelines on wastewater standards, set clear timelines on when wastewater treatment facilities should be installed or told them when inspections would take place. Meanwhile, factory owners believe the committee has neither the power nor the desire to punish those that do not comply with its orders to treat waste.

Established in February 1995, the zone is home to 588 factories. While nominally supervised by YCDC, it is mostly run by the management committee.

“We clean up the environment here, we put in our own electricity, we take care of complaints – but we have no cooperation with YCDC,” U Aung Kyaw Oo said.

The lack of wastewater management affects not only residents but also businesses. U Aung Shwe, the owner of Nwe Tha Zin Min ground nut oil plant in the Hlaing Tharyar Industrial Zone, said neighbouring businesses were constantly dumping waste into drains near his factory.

However, he said he felt he had little recourse.

“One of my neighbours throws their waste cotton into the drain ... and then another creates a huge amount of noise all the time. But we can't do anything because the factory is owned by the son of a Union minister,” he said.

EU stands by UN resolution

Regional bloc will submit resolution despite protests from President U Thein Sein that it is not needed

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THE European Union has refused to back away from plans to submit a resolution to the United Nations General Assembly on Myanmar's human rights record, despite President U Thein Sein's insistence that they are no longer needed.

During a speech in Milan, Italy, on October 17, the president said Myanmar had made "considerable progress in human rights protection ... but the international community has not recognised the progress enough".

He urged the EU to stop submitting resolutions on Myanmar's human rights situation to the assembly's third committee and said Myanmar was "taking measures to sign human rights conventions, trade union conventions and conventions on women and children".

The speech was the most public appeal yet for an end to the right resolution, which has been an annual ritual since 1991.

However, the EU embassy in Yangon told *The Myanmar Times* last week that the resolution would be submitted this year as planned.

"In light of outstanding human rights challenges, the EU and other co-sponsors will again table a resolution on Myanmar," said Colin Steinbach, the head of the embassy's political, press and information section. "Discussions are ongoing in New York at the moment and there is good cooperation with Myanmar."

He did not say when the resolution would be submitted, but in previous years it has been tabled in November and approved in December.

President U Thein Sein's comments came just days before the United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, was due to formally submit her first country report to the UN General Assembly.

Ms Lee made her first visit to the country in July, shortly after taking over from Tomás Ojea Quintana in May, who held the position for six years.

There was speculation that she may adopt a softer approach than her predecessor, whose outspokenness drew fire from some within the government. However, observers said her report, which was circulated last week and warned of a possible backtracking on reforms, took a firm but fair line.

Mark Farmaner, the director of Burma Campaign UK, said he was surprised and impressed at Ms Lee's willingness to take up issues that have been a perennial source of tension between Nay Pyi Taw and the international community.

"Traditionally first reports from rapporteurs have been softer as they seek to establish dialogue with the government," he said, "To so prominently talk about possible signs of backtracking is an indication of how seriously concerned the special rapporteur is about this issue."

Presidential spokesperson U Ye Htut did not respond to requests for comment on the report.

Mr Farmaner said President U Thein Sein's speech in Milan was part of a "diplomatic offensive" aimed at building opposition to the special rapporteur mandate.

"The government is hoping that if it can stop the resolutions it can stop these reports," he said. "Rather than end human rights abuses, it is trying to cover them up."

The closest Myanmar has come to avoiding a resolution was in 2013, when the United States sent a démarche urging the EU to move ahead with a new resolution on Myanmar, following apparent reluctance from some EU member states to do so.

Myanmar, however, argued that no resolution was warranted and said it had been told that the EU "would end the practice of tabling a draft resolution against Myanmar" in 2013 in exchange for Myanmar helping the EU draft the 2012 resolution.

ELECTORAL REFORM

MPs mull eight paths to democracy

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WHICH way to true democracy? The report of the electoral review commission set up to advise parliament on the voting system to be used in next year's general election contains eight possible paths. Now MPs will have to choose which to follow.

The first method is the so-called first-past-the-post system traditionally used in Myanmar. The second is proportional representation, which is less familiar and has aroused some objections.

The remaining electoral systems the commission presented combine various elements of the first and second systems, which could appeal to certain regions of the country.

Some military MPs, including commission members, argue that the current system is simple and tends to produce clear majorities.

But commission chair U Tin Maung Oo told Pyithu Hluttaw MPs in his presentation last week that a hybrid system could be more suitable.

"The third and fourth systems could ensure opportunities for us and the states," U Tin Maung Oo said.

The third system would see all



Nay Pyi Taw residents vote in the 2010 election. Photo: Staff

those who get above 50 percent of votes elected directly, while in cases where no candidates get above 50pc the votes would be shared proportionally between political parties.

Under the fourth system, which would apply in regions but not states, candidates could be elected with more than half the votes cast, while the votes of candidates receiving under 50pc would be combined to elect a second candidate. "The difference between the third and fourth system is that votes of the failed candidates are not added in the third system but will be added in the fourth system," said U Tin Maung Oo.

The fifth system would also only

apply to the regions, and would require two elections: one for 51 constituencies using FPTP, and another for 153 constituencies using proportional representation. As this would require not only constituency boundary changes but also some citizens voting twice and others once, it would have to be reviewed closely to see whether it conformed to the constitution.

The seventh and eighth systems, involving a mixture of FPTP and PR, would also require complex voting practices and amendments to the constitution, as well as separate elections.

The report was the second submitted by the commission, which was formed in July. Last month it gave parliament three options - FPTP, proportional representation and a hybrid - but was told by Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann to submit at least four more options by October 21.

He said last week he was satisfied with the updated report.

"The hluttaw will have to select the most suitable of those eight ways, and submit it to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw," he said.

However, NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi indicated her party was still opposed to proportion representation. - Translation by Thiri Min Htun

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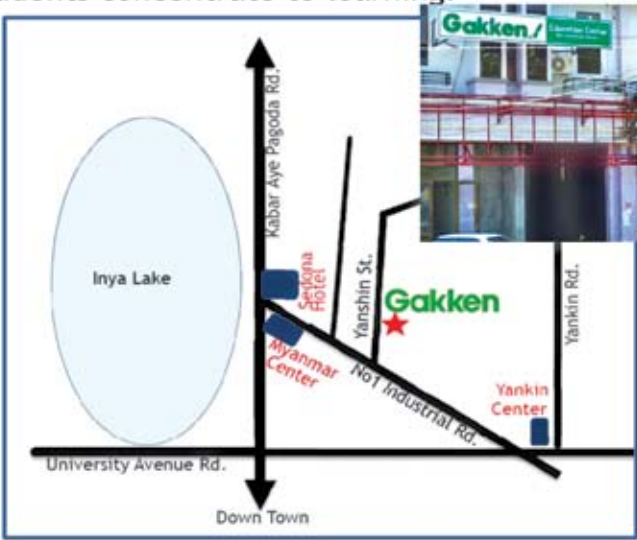
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EITI bodies to be expanded to four regions

Multi-Stakeholder Groups to be formed in Shan and Rakhine states and Magwe and Mandalay Regions



KHIN SU
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THE Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) process is to be expanded to the state and region level by the end of October, civil society leader said last week.

The decision to set up a pilot project in two states and two regions was made following the sixth meeting of the Multi Stakeholder Group in Nay Pyi Taw on October 3. The MSG is a national-level body formed to oversee the EITI process that comprises six government officials, six private sector representatives and nine representatives from civil society.

MSG member Daw Moe Moe Tun, the head of Pyin Oo Lwin-based civil society group Sein Lan Pyin Oo Lwin, said the pilot project will see MSG bodies formed in four states and regions - Magwe, Mandalay, Rakhine and Shan - ahead of a possible national roll-out. The bodies will be set up by the end of October.

The four states and regions were chosen because they are along the path of the Myanmar-China natural gas pipeline, she said.

She added that the government had initially tried to exclude Shan State because of the large number of non-state armed groups, but civil society representatives successfully made the case for it to be included.

Informal networks of civil society groups have already been set up at the region level to contribute to the EITI process. However,

many have reported harassment at the hands of region and township officials, particularly when they have tried to examine local mining projects.

Daw Moe Moe Tun said a recent visit to a mine site in Mandalay Region's Thabeikkyin township - as part of a workshop with government, civil society and private sector representatives - had highlighted the reluctance of some to support EITI.

"The manager from the gold-mining company [in Weikthay village] came and told us not to take photos. We replied that we are representatives from EITI. He responded that we needed to ask for permission from him first and that if there were 'problems' he couldn't take responsibility. It really sounded like a threat," she said.

Daw Moe Moe Tun said a recent EITI awareness-raising workshop in Shan State had resulted in businesspeople accusing activists of trying to create conflict, while officials in Mon State had banned them completely from holding an EITI workshop.

"Even though the national implementation process for EITI looks smooth, at the regional and township levels it is still hard to implement because of the local authorities and companies."

Myanmar signed up to EITI on July 2. It has been granted candidate country status and is required to produce its first EITI report by January 2016.

The process requires input from the private sector and civil society, and also requires the government to give legal protection to those participating in EITI and promote awareness about the initiative.



Puppeteers perform with marionettes at a theatre in Yangon. Photo: Christopher Davy

Marionette groups hang together



CHERRY
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STRIVING to keep one of the country's best-known art forms alive, puppeteers have formed the Myanmar Marionette Organisation to safeguard and promote traditional puppetry.

Committee member U Ye Dwe said the aim was to help scattered troupes throughout the country work together to safeguard and promote their skills.

"Myanmar marionette technique is unique, but the art will disappear if we do not preserve our expertise and share it with the new generation in time," he said.

In addition to helping older puppet-masters pass on their knowledge, the organisation wants to build networks with similar groups overseas, and to promote different forms of the art, including shadow, hand, water, and string puppetry. Also planned is an information and communication centre.

Mandalay Marionette Theatre leader Daw Ma Ma Naing said more strident efforts were needed to promote and preserve puppetry. While the Ministry of Culture hosts a performing arts competition for 20 traditional pursuits, including puppetry, few had continued to perform in public, she said.

"I organised a group of prize-winners to perform in schools in Mandalay. It enabled puppeteers to practise their profession and also encouraged children to cherish the art," she said.

She tried to stage a similar event in Yangon but could not get it off

'The art will disappear if we do not preserve our expertise and share it with the new generation.'

U Ye Dwe

Myanmar Marionette Organisation

the ground, and is now offering traditional marionette manipulation training at her private school.

Writer Chin San Win, who has promoted puppetry in his books, said getting children to cherish puppetry amid a climate of modernisation was a challenge.

Marionette theatre is a mix of music and dance. Artists and enthusiasts have struggled to preserve the art form since interest began to decline in the 1970s.

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Take two: iPay system to return to city buses

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PUBLIC transport chiefs in Yangon are to try again to introduce the iPay card system to pay fares. The Yangon Region Supervisory Committee for Motor Vehicles, better known as Ma Hta Tha, is discussing the project with the Kispandadi company, said Ma Hta Tha chair U Hla Aung, although it remains unclear how they will overcome previous resistance from conductors, who were even known to break the iPay machines.

U Hla Aung said a prepaid system was needed because of the high number of complaints received concerning conductors overcharging passengers.

"Every month we get more than 100 complaints from passengers about this - it's always top of the complaints list," he said. "By using this card system, customers will no longer need to complain."

The system will be reintroduced on routes charging a fixed price, rather than a rate per mile travelled.

If successful, it could also prompt a shift to a salaried system for drivers and conductors, which some say will improve road safety and driving standards. Currently bus staff take home whatever they earn in fares above a set fee that goes to the owner of the vehicle, and this results in fierce competition between individual buses as more passengers results in higher profits.

But attempts three years ago to introduce an iPay system were abandoned because of opposition by bus conductors, who feared the loss of earnings because they could not collect cash from passengers using the system.

"Kispandadi installed the system in 333 vehicles on the Parami line, but it was not a success," said U Hla Aung.

He added that Ma Hta Tha had received complaints from passengers that conductors told them the iPay machines were out of service, or that the batteries were dead, or had even destroyed the machine.

Kispandadi is now surveying the number of iPay machines in use with a view to upgrading them and extending the service to all lines.

Kispandadi operations manager Ko Thant Zin said, "We are cooperating with Ever Green bus company, which will run a new line using the iPay system, which we hope will solve the problems of collecting the fares. But we need the support of the conductors."

Passenger Ko Thant Zin said, "The buses are so crowded, just getting in to work is exhausting. I don't care about the fare, but it would help to have a more convenient system."

A scheme devised in June to operate 25 buses using iPay is still on hold, pending the outcome of discussions over the fare and the use of CNG fuel. At present, there are eight bus lines using iPay on 335 buses.



A conductor hangs from the door of a bus in Yangon. Photo: Staff

IN BRIEF

Commission to hold human rights, agribusiness workshop

Land grabs and other issues involving human rights are to be investigated by the country's top human rights body. The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission told parliament last week that it would organise a workshop on human rights and agribusiness in early November.

The workshop is being organised jointly with the UK-based Forest Peoples Program, commission chair U Win Mra told reporters. "Delegates from human rights commissions in the region and INGOs involved in agribusiness will participate" in the November 4-5 event at Kandawgyi Palace Hotel in Yangon, he said.

The workshop will highlight land disputes across the country, the subject of most complaints before the commission. He said disputes between private landowners were hard to resolve because of complex resale arrangements.

The commission also reported to hluttaw on the visits it has made to prisons, including the feeding of prisoners, and its reform suggestions.

The 11-member National Human Rights Commission was reconstituted in September after the abolition of the former commission, which was set up three years earlier. The reformation of the commission was criticised for a lack of transparency and consultation.

- Htoo Thant

Migrants formally retract confessions

Human rights commission writes to counterpart in Thailand asking it to ensure a fair trial for two men accused of murdering British couple

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TWO Myanmar nationals accused of murdering a British couple on the Thai island of Koh Tao have signed a formal statement claiming they were not at the scene of the crime and only confessed after being tortured by Thai police.

The statement and a petition to halt the impending trial were sent to the public prosecutor's office in Koh Samui, according to Andy Hall, a migrant rights expert who is assisting the defence of the two men.

As of the morning of October 22, the prosecutor's office had not responded to the statement.

It comes a day after the Myanmar

National Human Rights Commission asked its counterpart in Thailand to ensure that the two migrant workers receive a fair trial.

In the October 21 letter, the commission, which was recently reformed and made formally independent, also asked Thailand's National Human Rights Commission to investigate allegations that the two arrested men were tortured into confessing to the murders.

"The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission would like to appeal through the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand to see to it that the two Myanmar workers are not subjected to any form of torture or ill treatment in accordance with the stipulations under the

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights], and for the legal process not to take to a longer period than is required," the letter said.

The previous day the head of the Thai rights commission had vowed to investigate the claims that the suspects were tortured during their interrogation.

"The commission will invite authorities involved in the investigation to meet next week to see if there is reason to suspect that they used force or tortured the suspects," National Human Rights Commission member Niran Pitakwachara told news agency Reuters. "They told us they were tortured but we have not been able to confirm this yet."

The small island, long a popular

destination for tourists, has been the centre of international media attention since September 15, when the bodies of David Miller and Hannah Witheridge were discovered on a beach.

After a two-week investigation, Thai authorities identified two Myanmar migrant workers as suspects. The men were brought in for questioning on October 1 and confessed after several hours of interrogation, according to Thai media.

However, the arrests have been controversial because of reports suggesting the men may have been mistreated during their interrogation. Senior police officials in Ko Tao reportedly insisted from the start that the murder could not have been

committed by a Thai person and made the Myanmar migrant worker community their focus, creating the perception that they may not have considered all options.

The rights commission's letter comes after similar public pleas for a fair trial from Amnesty International and the national parliament in Nay Pyi Taw.

The two migrants are in detention on Koh Samui awaiting the public prosecutor's decision over whether to charge them with murder. Sources close to the defence team say they expect the prosecutor's decision will be announced in the coming days.

If convicted, both men could face the death penalty.

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Minister to raise journalists' case with president



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MINISTER for Information U Ye Htut has promised to raise the case of five journalists jailed on incitement charges with President U Thein Sein. Three reporters and two publishers for the now-defunct paper *Bi Mon Te Nay* were sentenced to two years' imprisonment on October 16 by Yangon's Pabedan Township Court.

The minister made the promise at a press conference after meeting members of the Myanmar Journalists'

Network on October 21.

"The president cannot interfere in the judiciary sector, but he does have the authority to consider cases after a verdict has been handed down," he said.

The reporters were arrested on July 8 after publishing an announcement from an activist group, the Movement for Democracy Current Force (MDCF), that stated Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and ethnic political leaders had formed an interim government.

Reporters without Borders, a France-based media freedom advocacy group, has condemned the sentences as disproportionate. "This constitutes a serious violation of media freedom," said Benjamin Ismaïl, the head of the organisation's Asia desk.

"It shows that Myanmar's current authorities have no intention of abandoning the former military government's repressive legislation and using the new legislation, which shows more respect for freedom of information," he added.

On July 10, Pakokku court sentenced four journalists and the CEO of the paper *Unity* to 10 years in prison under the State Secrets Act for reporting on an alleged secret chemical weapons factory, but the sentence was later reduced to seven years by Magwe Region Court. They have since submitted an appeal to Supreme Court in Nay Pyi Taw.

'The president ... [has] the authority to consider cases after a verdict has been handed down.'

U Ye Htut

Minister for Information



IN PICTURES

PHOTO: SI THU LWIN

Firefighters attend the scene of a blaze at a Chinese-language school in Mandalay's Maha Aung Myay township on October 22. The fire started when an air-con safeguard overheated and damaged four rooms in the two-storey building. The Fire Services Department estimated the damage at more than K8.7 million.

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PAVILION, KUALA LUMPUR

New project to register children in rural areas

BIRTH registration is coming to the countryside, as authorities act to increase the number of children with birth certificates and proper registration. In some parts of the country, more than three-quarters of the children are unregistered.

National Birth Registration Week was launched on October 20 at Mawlamyine in Mon State, Magwe Region and Haka in Chin State to mark the children's right to survival, development, protection and participation.

The project involves the ministries of immigration and population, national planning and economic development, health, and home affairs, which are working with UNICEF and with financial support from the European Union. It focuses on registering children in Chin and Mon states and Magwe Region and building awareness of the importance of birth registration. "The long-term aim is to achieve a comprehensive civil registration system," said Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Win Myint.

An estimated 1.6 million children aged under five years - about 30 percent - remain unregistered. While most children in Yangon are registered, 76pc in Chin State, 43pc in Magwe Region, and 11pc in Mon State do not possess a birth certificate.

Now local officials will seek out unregistered children and issue them with birth certificates, which will eventually permit access to education and health services.

The Coordination Committee for Birth Registration - established in early 2014 and chaired by the immigration minister - has improved coordination at all levels, UNICEF said in a statement. - *May Thinzar Naing*



Activists protest against the proposed introduction of proportional representation on August 5. Photo: Zarni Phyo

Yangon police permit almost 90pc of protests



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POLICE in Yangon Region approved almost 90 percent of the more than 300 applications to protest submitted so far this year, a senior official said last week.

Police Lieutenant Colonel Myint Htwe, the head of police for Yangon's eastern district, said 301 applications had been submitted from January to the end of September, of which 266 were approved.

Eighteen applications were rejected, while 17 were withdrawn, he said.

Fifty-two people were charged under section 18 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law for holding illegal protests, he added.

The law was approved on December 1, 2011, and came into force with the enactment of by-laws on July 5, 2012. However, it has proven controversial because it gives the township police chief significant discretion to reject a protest application.

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, convictions for violating the peaceful protest law were the main reason for the number of political prisoners increasing from 29 at the end of 2013 to 80 by the end of September.

Earlier this year, amendments were passed to make it more difficult for police to reject applications but these are not yet in effect because the government has not changed the by-laws.

Under the law, a person must submit their application to the township police chief at least five days in advance. If approved, the police chief forwards it to the township administrator.

"The aim of the protest, the place, the date and time, the subject of the speech, the arrangements made and the number of people involved must be submitted in advance," a spokesperson said.

United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar Yanghee Lee raised concerns about the peaceful protest law in her report to the United Nations General Assembly last week.

Ms Lee said that while the changes should make it easier to stage demonstrations the rules were still burdensome. "[T]he exercise of the right to freedom of assembly should not be subject to authorisation by the authorities ... Prior notification should be sufficient," she said.

Citing official figures, she said 85 of 86 applications to protest made between June 24 and July 31 had been approved.

- *Translation by Win Thaw Tar*

IN BRIEF

CSOs to give input on Open Government Partnership bid

Civil society groups will meet this weekend to discuss the government's plan to join the Open Government Partnership, an international standard to improve government transparency and fight corruption.

The October 25 meeting will seek civil society input on President U Thein Sein's commitment to joining the OGP by 2016 and how Myanmar can meet the high eligibility standards. The British embassy in Yangon said in a statement ahead of the meeting that civic engagement is one of the criteria for Myanmar to reach OGP eligibility status, "so getting local CSOs involved at an early stage is an important first step".

After President U Thein Sein announced Myanmar's intention to join the OGP in November 2012, the British government subsequently asked the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to help Myanmar prepare for membership.

To be eligible for membership Myanmar needs to score 12 out of a possible 16 points across four criteria: fiscal transparency, access to information, income and asset disclosures, and citizen engagement. - *Thomas Kean*

Nay Pyi Taw Council, development committee seek funds

Nay Pyi Taw Council and Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee have requested more than K13 billion in additional funding for the 2014-15 financial year, a parliamentary bill committee member said last week.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw initially approved a budget of about K110 billion for the council and about K18 billion for the city development committee.

However, U Saw Hla Tun, secretary of the Joint Bill Committee, said on October 20 that Nay Pyi Taw Council had requested another K8.451 billion and Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee another K4.650 billion. - *Htoo Thant, translation by Zar Zar Soe*



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Govt requests K2.2 trillion as tax revenue rises 20pc

Supplementary budget request likely to be trimmed to keep it under 10 percent cap, bill committee says

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THE Union government has asked MPs to approve an additional K2.235 trillion for the 2014-15 financial year, as it revealed that tax revenues for the year are likely to be 20 percent higher than initial forecasts, pushing the tax to GDP ratio close to 9pc.

The supplementary budget request for "essential" unforeseen expenditures was submitted on

8.96

Revised estimate for tax revenues as a percentage of gross domestic product in 2014-15, up from 7.39 percent

October 20 and presented to MPs by Minister for Finance U Win Shein. The request was initially K2.669 trillion but was revised down, U Win Shein said, in order to get the budget deficit to GDP ratio below 4pc.

Of the figure, K2.032 trillion is earmarked for the Union government, while K203 billion is for the 14 region and state governments.

If approved the budget deficit would be around K2.5 trillion, with K19.932 trillion of revenue and K22.514 trillion of expenditures, U Win Shein said. The budget deficit to GDP ratio is forecast at 3.9pc based on a GDP of K66.235 trillion.

Tax revenues are forecast to jump significantly in the amended budget from K4.890 trillion to K5.936 trillion, a rise of almost K1.05 trillion. As a result, the tax revenue to GDP ratio will increase from 7.39pc to 8.96pc.

U Win Shein said the rise in tax revenues was based on significant increases in collections from oil and gas extraction, commercial tax, customs duties, transportation tax and lottery tax.

However, the supplementary budget is likely to be trimmed further due to rules that state it should not be more than 10pc of the initial budget. The request is currently around 10.54pc of the budget approved earlier this year, according to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee.

The committee expressed concern that the budget request made



A construction workers sweeps dust from a road in Yangon. Photo: Ko Taik

no mention of compensation for confiscated land.

"It is unusual that there is no additional request for land compensation because ... there are cases where land compensation has been

required due to investigations into confiscations during the first five months of this financial year," Joint Bill Committee secretary U Saw Hla Tun said.

- Translation by Thiri Min Htun

Requisitioning law set to be abolished

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THE government plans to repeal a 1947 law that allows the government to requisition property at any time.

Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brigadier General Kyaw Kyaw Tun submitted a bill to abolish the Requisitioning (Emergency Provisions) Act 1947 to the Amyotha Hluttaw on October 14.

He said the act was no longer suitable and should be repealed to give strong protection to movable and immovable property rights. He said the proposal to repeal the act had been approved by both the Attorney General's Office and the President's Office.

"[The President's Office] advisory team had no remark on the bill because it said the provisions in the act are not suitable for the present time," Brig Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun said.

The act was enacted to enable the government "any land, building, part of a building, or other premises, together with any fixtures, fittings, furniture or other things therein, or any water-supply system connected or pertaining to such land or premises" on the orders of the president.

The act states that property can only be requisitioned for use by the government or civil servants, and there is also a process for compensating the owners of requisitioned property.

The proposal to repeal the act was seconded by Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Kan Nyunt and will be discussed in the coming weeks.

- Translation by Zar Zar Soe

High-speed rail planned by 2023

AN eight-year upgrading plan could result in a 100-kilometre-an-hour train service between Yangon and Mandalay, parliament heard last week. Deputy Minister for Transport U Myint Thein told the Amyotha Hluttaw that the project, to be carried out in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), would start next year and be completed in 2023.

Measurements, soil tests and training had already begun for the work on the 616km (385-mile) route.

U Myint Thein also told MPs that

the government had spent K75.77 million so far this year to repair 54 railway stations across the country. He was answering a question from U Thet Naing Oo, who represents Bago Region's No 6 constituency.

Upgrading the country's 960 stations would cost about K28.8 billion, he said, adding that the ministry had invited tenders for the upgrading of eight stations, including Shwebo in Sagaing Region and Thilawa in Yangon Region, at a cost of K128.06 million. - Pyae Thet Phyo, translation by Zar Zar Soe

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PROFILE

The quiet revolutionary

A chance meeting in 2008 inspired Daw Htar Htar to tackle a rarely discussed topic: women's sexuality



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NOTHING about Daw Htar Htar proclaims her as a revolutionary. The 41-year-old speaks softly and simply. But her message aims at nothing less than the transformation of the national culture. She talks about sex.

This is something Myanmar women never do – to speak openly about sexuality and their sexual activities. It's now something they can do at Akhaya, the centre Daw Htar Htar opened in 2010 to give women the chance to discuss sexual matters among themselves.

The inspiration to create Akhaya came from a chance two-hour meeting between Daw Htar Htar and an Israeli tourist, a sex therapist, in 2008. The therapist told Daw Htar Htar and nine other women of the same age about the nature of female sex and human sexual characteristics.

"This was the first time we'd heard this basic knowledge. It changed our thinking and lifestyle for good," said Daw Htar Htar.

Before this encounter, she worked for the Burnet Institute, an NGO offering HIV protection and treatment projects. She advised on protection and gave training about safe sex. Despite this role, she felt that the theory she taught was not grounded in daily life. The meeting with the Israeli therapist served to enlighten her – and highlight the shortcomings in sexual education for women in Myanmar.

While young men learn about sex from their brother or uncles, young females are not allowed to discuss it or to learn from older women, said Daw Htar Htar. Sex education is also considered to be a Western concept largely unacceptable in Myanmar culture.



Daw Htar Htar. Photo: Zarni Phy

As a result, Myanmar women believe, for example, that menstrual blood is dirty and makes them inferior to men. It is attitudes like this that she is endeavouring to change. "There's nothing dirty about it. This is not my opinion, but accepted medical fact," she said.

Before the Western-style lavatory in the Akhaya office, in Thiri Mingalar Street in Yangon's Sanchaung township, there hangs a full-length mirror. "Women never look properly

at their own organs. They think that it is shameful and inferior. I placed the mirror in the toilet to change their belief," Daw Htar Htar said.

Now she shares her knowledge with other women. She and her friends gather every week to discuss reproductive health, and the number of participants coming to her house is growing.

It has not all been plain sailing. Tensions arose with her husband because the long discussions she had

with her friends left her less time for family responsibilities.

More than 200 people from all social strata, from housemaids to nuns, including NGO staff, have come to learn about their bodies in Akhaya.

The sexual education program is not Daw Htar Htar's only initiative to improve the rights of women. In 2012 she launched the "whistle for help" campaign to combat sexual harassment on Yangon's bus lines.

The campaign attracted international media attention. Young wom-

'We must spotlight women leaders who emerge from an age-old culture of inequality.'

Daw Htar Htar
Akhaya

en once taught to feel shame and denied sex education are now self-confident and glad to take part in the campaign, she says.

Another event, held on February 14 in 2013 and 2014, aimed to end all forms of violence against women and girls, highlighting the abuse meted out to 1 billion women throughout the world.

Daw Htar Htar says she believes women's apparently subordinate position in the home conceals the responsibility they bear in the family. They are, she thinks, the gender which tends to take more responsibility, despite perceptions of being less important and the conviction of men that they are the ones in charge. "We must spotlight women leaders," she says, "who emerge from an age-old culture of inequality."

– Translation by Thiri Min Htun

IN BRIEF

Women's forum to be held in Patheingyi
Civil society groups will host a women's forum in the Ayeyarwady Region capital Patheingyi on October 29-30, aimed at enhancing women's participation in the country's political process.

The forum is being organised by 28 civil society groups who are working in coordination with the Ayeyarwady Region government.

"By holding this forum we want to explore strategies to get more women participating in politics, as we believe this will enhance the democratic reforms," said Daw Shwe Shwe Sein Latt from Phan Tee Eain group, who is one of the organisers.

The forum is being held for the third time, she said, and participants will also review and evaluate action plans from the previous two events.

Six representatives from each state and region will be invited to the forum, while some senior political party members, civil society leaders and prominent activists will be invited to attend as guests. – Lun Min Mang

EU meets civil society

Nearly 80 civil society organisations met with European Union representatives in Yangon last week to discuss how the EU can support the transition to democracy in Myanmar. A further meeting took place in Mawlamyine, with a third scheduled in Yangon for November 14.

The findings from the consultations will go toward drawing up a roadmap for EU engagement with civil society for the period 2014-17. The roadmap will help the organisations strengthen their role in policy-making, service delivery and institutional reform, and building transparency and accountability mechanisms as the transition proceeds.

In his opening address, EU ambassador Roland Kobia said CSOs played a key role in the transitional process and would receive EU support.

"Politically and financially, the EU can provide support, but the nature of that support and the work that is done, must be determined on the ground. It's about working through many channels. We want to talk civil society directly, without going through anyone," he said.

– Cherry Thein



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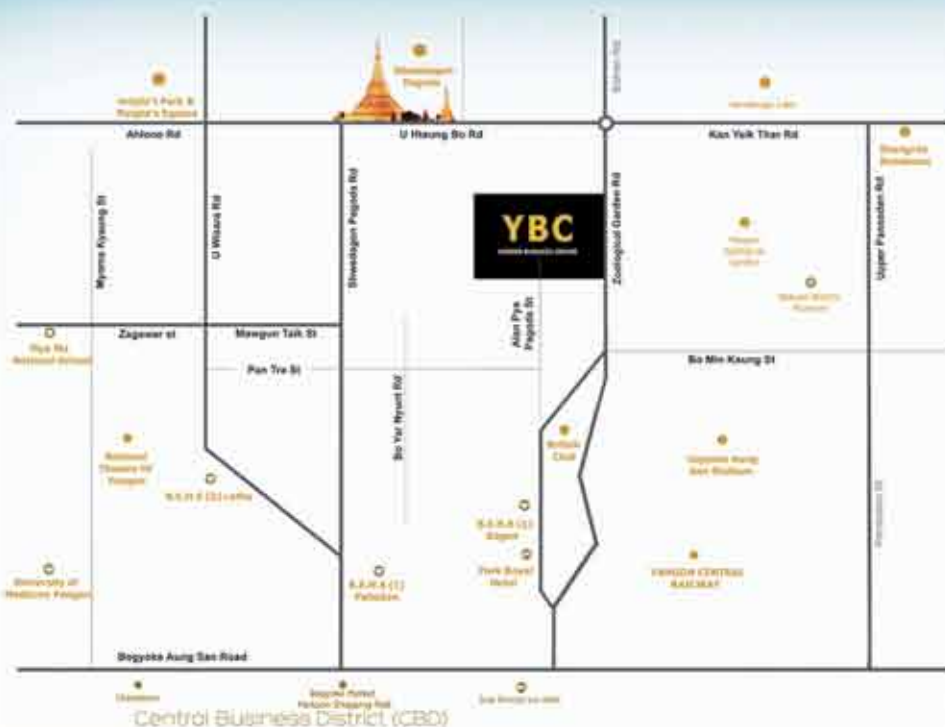


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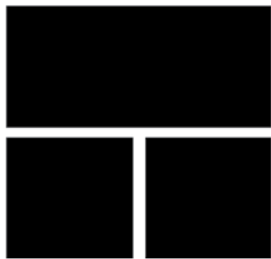
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Cheated seafarers spe 'It's simply human traf

Lured by the promise of high-paying jobs on international ships, hundreds of sailors



SHWEGU
THITSAR

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Ko Aung Naing's dream was to be a seaman on a shipping vessel. But when his parents paid an employment agency K3.3 million to get him a job on a foreign cargo ship, he didn't expect to end up working near a foreign port for a meagre wage as an assistant welder.

His 900 ringgit (US\$300) per month salary is barely enough to cover his living expenses in Sibu, in Malaysia's eastern state of Sarawak, let alone begin paying off the loan that his parents took out to pay the agency.

Employment and living conditions in Sibu are "very unpleasant," says Ko Aung Naing, who has been in Malaysia for three months. He relates the case of one Myanmar man working on a palm oil plantation in the area who was "severely beaten" by a gang because he had tried to run away from his job.

"Most people can't endure that kind of hard work," he said. "I felt very sorry when this happened but I can't give any help to him because I'm struggling to get by as well. Plantation owners have even threatened to kill anybody who runs away."

But with debts at home and no money to return to Myanmar, Ko Aung Naing has little option but to wait for a chance to get on a ship. And he is not alone; he and others in Sibu interviewed by *The Myanmar Times* estimated there are several hundred Myanmar nationals waiting for jobs on shipping vessels - including one man who has been there for six years. Some have jobs in small workshops, like Ko Aung Naing, while others work in factories, or on fishing boats or local vessels carrying construction materials.

"We are in a very tough situation," he said. "So far, we haven't seen any opportunities to get on a ship but we also can't go home. Instead, we have to work for a meagre income and try to save money to pay back the fee that our parents borrowed to pay the agency. But I am not ready to give up on my dream to be a sailor."

Going to sea has always been an attractive job in Myanmar. However, in the past two years an industry has arisen to exploit the dreams and lack of knowledge of young Myanmar men and their families. Many are misled into thinking that by paying thousands of dollars to employment agencies they will secure well-paying jobs on reputable cargo ships.

As a result, the number of registered sailors has grown to more than 98,000, according to the Department of Marine Administration, yet of this figure only 30,000 are on a ship at any one time. Those without experience are also at a disadvantage, with experienced sailors getting most of the jobs on offer.

Seafarers' organisations, such as the Myanmar Maritime Workers' Federation (MMWF) and the Myanmar Seamen's Federation, have been widely criticised for failing to address the problem. Some of them seem more interested in raising funds than helping their members, said Ko Nyo Tun, an executive at the Bangkok-based Seafarers' Union of Burma.

"There are no organisations able to resolve seamen's problems effectively. They just want to recruit more



Containers are loaded onto a vessel at a port in Qingdao, China. Photo: AFP

members and seek international financing," he said.

But MMWF general secretary U Tin Ko Ko Thet said the federation helped to negotiate on behalf of seafarers who get in disputes with job agencies, while also conducting training to better prepare sailors before they head abroad.

He said seamen who have been misled by the agency could take legal action, including the filing of criminal charges for deception. However, most do not because they do not have enough money or do not realise their rights. Some find it too difficult because they are from outside Yangon, where most employment agencies are based. "People who live in Yangon can go to the agency every day. But those from outside the city have difficulty demanding a refund because of the expense of transport, so they don't claim a refund," he said.

He agreed that many agencies are exploitative, pointing to the fact they collect service charges from seafarers for placements but also get payments from shipping lines for placing workers in jobs. This continues to happen despite the government issuing an order on July 17, 2013, outlawing the levying of service charges to sailors. U Tin Ko Ko Thet said the fee had actually risen since the order was issued.

"I don't know who started the system that seafarers have to pay the agents but the agents get income from both sides. The fee used to be \$300, but it has now risen to \$500 or more. The government has asked the agencies not to charge the seamen, but only the employers, but I'm not sure if any agreement has been signed."

U Toe Myit, director of the DMA's Seafarer Division, said because of the service charge agencies have an incentive to recruit as many sailors as possible, regardless of whether they have positions for them.

"If they can't get the service charge from them, [agencies] won't lie," he said. "The DMA is planning to help seafarers so they can avoid being cheated by creating a list of shipping companies so they can check whether the company they are in contact with is official."

U Htin Aung Thwin from Victory Shipping & Trading Company agreed that there were some dodgy agencies in the industry but said it was also difficult to ensure every sailor is

placed on a ship immediately.

"Sometimes the ships leave the port suddenly after they have finished loading. In this situation, the men have to wait until that ship lands again," he said. "My company has sent more than 700 seafarers and most of them can work on the ship within a short time. But some companies lie and say they have work on a ship when they don't."

U Tin Ko Ko Thet said prospective sailors also need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities. "If a vessel is not the one stipulated by the company, the seafarer can charge the company. If they're afraid to fight for their rights, they will lose their rights," he said.

In practice, however, this can prove difficult. Until recently, sailors who asked for help or submitted a complaint to the International Transport Workers' Federation or International Labour Organization were likely to

'So far, we haven't seen any opportunities to get on a ship but we also can't go home.'

Ko Aung Naing
Sailor in Sibu, Malaysia

have their Continuous Discharge Certificate - an identity document for registered seamen - confiscated by the DMA. While the government insists this policy is no longer in place, many sailors fear they will have trouble getting work if they complain about abuses or exploitation.

While Ko Aung Naing is not ready to give up on his dream, others would be more than happy to return home from Sibu - if they had the money. Ko Soe Thu, who paid the K3.3 million agency fee with support from his parents, said the delay and the uncertainty over when he would board ship had left him depressed.

"The agency assured me of an urgent job on a bunker ship earning nearly K500,000 a month. I wanted to acquire sea experience and then shift to another job with better pay. But I've

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are stranded in Malaysia



been stranded here for two months,” he said by phone. “I will go home if I don’t get a job on a bunker [fuel] ship.”

He expressed anger at the way the recruitment company in Yangon had misled him and other Myanmar sailors in Sibü.

“All of us came here in the hope of getting a job immediately. Recruitment companies should take responsibility for their failings and should refund the money,” he said.

Mandalay resident Ko Ko Naing, who is waiting in Sibü to join a ship, said he had been promised a job on a bunker. “I’ve been waiting a month. They asked me to join other vessels. I told my family to send me money to get back home if no suitable vessel becomes available.”

He said some had little option but to stay. “I feel sorry for those who can’t afford to go back. I’ve since learned from more experienced people you should bring enough money with you to get home again.”

Ko Khun Chan said he graduated as an engineer before training as a sailor and signing a contract with an agency for an immediate job on a bunker ship. He paid K3.2 million to come to Sibü, where he has spent the past month waiting, with no word about a ship.

“We’ve found there are a lot of seafarers waiting here for months. My cousin’s parents mortgaged their home to raise the agency fee,” he said. “People here are demoralised and angry.”

Ko Chan, who has been working at a car workshop for the past two months while waiting for a berth, said even returning home is fraught with danger. “Two men who arranged a return trip for themselves are now in hiding from the police because their agent informed the police about their plans,” he said.

He expressed anger at both the Myanmar government and seafarer organisations for ignoring those stuck in Sibü – and not lifting a finger to stop more young men from Myanmar’s rural areas chasing their dreams and ending up stuck in a foreign town, heavily in debt. “There’s no one here to help us,” he said. “Agents in Yangon and in Malaysia know exactly what is happening but they don’t stop cheating people, they just keep sending new men here. It’s simply human trafficking.” – Translation by Thiri Min Htun and Zar Zar Soe

Quarry workers bring wage cut to tribunal

SI THU LWIN
sithulwin.mmtimes.igmail.com

QUALITY, not quantity – that’s the new pay scheme for rocks at AAA cement factory in southern Shan State. Quarry workers, however, say that it’s left them digging into their pockets to make ends meet, which is why they’ve taken the case to a labour tribunal.

From 2009 to 2012, the cement factory paid a fixed price to contracted union workers for gravel extracted from Ka-hnyo hill in Hnyo Gyi village tract, Ywar Ngan township, said U Tun Min Hlaing, a quarry worker at AAA cement factory for 8 years.

But starting in late 2012, he said, the factory began paying workers according to the quality of crushed rocks, based on four possible ratings. And since most fell into the lowest grade, the workers allege they are being deliberately underpaid.

“They already examined the quality of rocks from the hill,” said U Tun Min Hlaing, a worker from Taung Taw village. “The quality of rocks doesn’t concern us, but we should be paid depending on how much we dig.”

He added the low payments had left workers with “considerable difficulty in dealing with living costs”.

The workers brought the dispute to the township labour mediator, but without result. They are now awaiting a decision from the Arbitration Council.

U Myi Yu, head of the AAA cement factory, said initially that he would



Workers from a Shan State quarry speak to the media last week about their low pay. Photo: Si Thu Lwin

not comment further until the council makes its decision.

However, he added that workers had agreed to the change in pay structure and were “only hoping for a higher price”.

“Fixing prices depending on quality is included in the contract,” he said.

For 100 cubic feet (2.83 cubic metres) of crushed rock, AAA pays K5500 for A-grade; K4500 for B-grade; K3500 for C-grade; and K3000 for D-grade. If the rocks have soil mixed in, the prices are cut by K500. U Tun Min Hlaing said sometimes a mix of grades appears in a single batch, making

objective measurement impossible.

Another quarry worker, U Tun Naing Oo, said the company does not pay anything at all for the lowest-quality gravel, which he called “not fair”.

“We have to quarry low-quality rocks until we get good-quality ones. But the factory is using many tonnes of these low-quality rocks daily without paying us anything. So we also want compensation for these low-quality rocks of K2500 per 100 cubic feet,” U Tun Naing Oo said.

The quarry workers said they plan to stage demonstration camps at the hill if the tribunal’s decision does not

satisfy them.

U Win Naing, a central committee member of the Federation of Trade Unions-Myanmar and head of its upper Myanmar branch, said that the federation was supporting the workers’ bid for higher pay.

“They are members of our labour union so we will help them to gain access to the labour rights they deserve,” U Win Naing said. “We plan to report [the situation] to the Ministry of Labour and government departments. If necessary, we will help them in resolving this issue within the legal framework.” – Translation by Zar Zar Soe

Golden Myanmar Airlines

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Y5 238	BANGKOK - YANGON	21:30	22:20

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(Reg: Nos. IV/6294/2011 & IV/14769/2014)

in respect of: - "Ground and whole bean coffee, cocoa, tea (herbal and non-herbal), coffee, tea, cocoa and espresso beverages, and beverages made with a base of coffee and/or espresso, beverages

made with a base of tea, powdered chocolate and vanilla; sauces to add to beverages; chocolate syrup, flavoring syrups to add to beverages, baked goods including muffins, scones, biscuits, cookies, pastries and breads, sandwiches, granola, ready-to-drink coffee, ready-to-drink tea, ice cream and frozen confections; chocolate, candy and confections." - Class: 30

"Business administration; business management; franchising, namely providing technical assistance in the establishment and/or operation of restaurants, cafes, coffee houses and snack bars; retail services in the field of: coffee, tea, cocoa, packaged and prepared foods, electric appliances, non-electric appliances, housewares, kitchenware, clocks, watches, kitchen timers, stop watches, jewelry, books, musical recordings, mouse pads, wallets, billfolds, tote bags, purses, briefcases, book bags, valises and umbrellas, all made of cloth, plastic or leather, key fobs of leather, clothing, caps and hats, toys, including teddy bears, stuffed toys, plush toys, dolls and accessories therefor, Christmas ornaments; wholesale distributorships, wholesale stores and wholesale ordering services all in the field of: coffee, tea, cocoa, packaged and prepared foods, electric appliances, non-electric appliances, housewares, kitchenware, clocks, watches, kitchen timers, stop watches, jewelry, books, musical recordings, mouse pads, wallets, billfolds, tote bags, purses, briefcases, book bags, valises and umbrellas, all made of cloth, plastic or leather, key fobs of leather, clothing, caps and hats, toys, including teddy bears, stuffed toys, plush toys, dolls and accessories therefor, Christmas ornaments; mail order services and mail order catalog 2 services, computerized on-line ordering services, computerized on-line retail services, on-line ordering services and on-line retail store services all in the field of: coffee, tea, cocoa, packaged and prepared foods, electric appliances, non-electric appliances, housewares, kitchenware, clocks, watches, kitchen timers, stop watches, jewelry, books, musical recordings, mouse pads, wallets, billfolds, tote bags, purses, briefcases, book bags, valises and umbrellas, all made of cloth, plastic or leather, key fobs of leather, clothing, caps and hats, toys, including teddy bears, stuffed toys, plush toys, dolls and accessories therefor, Christmas ornaments; computerized online gift registry and ordering service." - Class: 35

"Restaurant, cafe, cafeteria, snack bar, coffee bar and coffee house, carry out restaurant, and take out restaurant services; catering services; coffee supply services for offices; contract food services; food preparation; preparation and sale of carry out foods and beverages." - Class: 43



(Reg: No. IV/14770/2014)

in respect of: - "Clocks, alarm clocks, watches and wristwatches, kitchen timers, stop watches; jewelry." - Class: 14

"Wallets, billfolds, tote bags, purses, briefcases, book bags, briefcase-type portfolios, valises and umbrellas, all made of cloth, plastic or leather, key fobs of leather." - Class: 18

"T-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, caps, hats, jackets, shorts, aprons and neckties." - Class: 25

"Toys, namely, teddy bears, stuffed toys, plush toys, dolls and accessories therefor, Christmas ornaments, yo-yos, playing cards." - Class: 28

"Financial services, namely, debit, credit and stored-value card services; charitable fund raising services." - Class: 36
"Entertainment services, namely, the organization, production, and presentation of lectures in the fields of news, politics, current events, human interest, comedy shows, concerts, sporting events; conducting of personal appearances by television personalities, movie stars, music celebrities, and sports celebrities for entertainment purposes; Publishing and production of musical and sound recordings; providing information in the fields of news and current events in the fields of health and wellness, music, travel, business, politics, economics, arts and leisure activities, human interest via communications networks; providing information in the fields of sports, and arts and leisure activities via communications networks; providing nondownloadable, pre-recorded music via communications networks; providing articles, nondownloadable movies and non-downloadable television programs in the fields of music, video, radio, television, news current events, sports, games, cultural events, comedy, drama, children's content, documentaries, current, planned, and historical offerings of music, books, television, and movies, celebrities entertainment, and arts and leisure activities via communications networks; music publishing services; publishing of music, articles, movies and television programs via communications networks; broadcasting of movies and television programs via communications networks; music production services; entertainment services, namely, providing reviews of music and commentary and articles about music." - Class 41



(Reg: No. IV/14771/2014)

in respect of: - "Electric coffee grinders for domestic or commercial use." -Class: 7

"Loyalty cards, incentive cards, reward cards, gift cards, and club cards that may be used towards the purchase of coffee, tea, cocoa, packaged and prepared foods, electric appliances, non-electric appliances, house wares, kitchenware, books, musical recordings, toys, including teddy bears, stuffed toys, plush toys, dolls and accessories therefor, ornaments; Computer application software for mobile devices and mobile phones, namely, software for consumers to access, monitor and manage their loyalty program profile and funds in associated stored value accounts, pay for purchases via mobile pay functionality, access menu data and store location information; Computer software for use in authoring, downloading, transmitting, receiving, editing, extracting, encoding, decoding, playing, storing and organizing audio data; audio recordings featuring classical, jazz, contemporary, pop, seasonal, Rhythm and Blues, soul, world, and rock music; digital audio players; downloadable music via a global computer network and wireless devices; covers and cases for cell phones and personal electronic devices; straps for cellphones; decorative ornaments for cell phones; holders for magnetically encoded gift cards; magnetic coded gift cards; mouse pads; vending machines." - Class : 9

"Electrical appliances, namely, espresso makers and coffee makers for domestic and/or commercial use; water filters; water filtration and purification units and replacement cartridges and filters therefor." - Class: 11

"Clocks, alarm clocks, watches and wristwatches, kitchen timers, stop watches; jewelry." - Class :14

"Wallets, billfolds, tote bags, purses, briefcases, book bags, briefcase-type portfolios, valises and umbrellas, all made of cloth, plastic or leather, key fobs of leather." - Class :18

"Hand operated coffee grinders and coffee mills, insulated coffee and beverage cups, paper cups, non-paper reusable coffee filters, non-paper coasters, insulated vacuum bottles, coffee cups, tea cups and mugs, glassware, dishes, plates and bowls, trivets, storage canisters, non-electric drip coffee makers, non-electric plunger-style coffee makers, decorative storage containers for food, non-electric tea kettles, tea infusers, tea pots, tea strainers, candle holder (not of precious metal), candlesticks not of precious metal, ceramic figurines, porcelain figurines." - Class :21

"T-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts, caps, hats, jackets, shorts, aprons and neckties." - Class :25

"Toys, namely, teddy bears, stuffed toys, plush toys, dolls and accessories therefor, Christmas ornaments, yo-yos, playing cards." - Class: 28

"Drinking milk; flavored milk; milkshakes; milk-based food beverages, excluding milkshakes; milk-based beverages containing coffee; milk-based beverages containing fruit juice; milk-based beverages containing fruit; milk-based beverages containing chocolate; milk-based beverages containing tea; soy-based food beverage used as a milk substitute; noncarbonated milk-based soft drinks; milk-based energy drinks; soy milk; nut milk; nut juice; fruit jams; compote, jellies, meat-based spread, fish-based spread, poultry-based spread, fruit-based spread, nut-based spread, vegetable-based spread, dairy-based spread; preserved fruit and vegetables, prepared meals consisting primarily of meat, soy, poultry, seafood, vegetables, fruits, tofu, and/or cheese; yogurt, yogurt-based beverages; whipping cream; prepared nuts, seasoned nuts, roasted nuts; edible oils and fats." - Class: 29

"Fruit juices; fruit and juice based beverages; fruit drinks and soft drinks containing fruit juices; frozen fruit beverages and frozen fruit-based beverages; fruit concentrates and purees used as ingredients of beverages; beverage concentrates and syrups for making frozen blended beverages; sparkling fruit and juice based beverages and soda beverages; vegetable-fruit juices; vegetable-based beverages; beverages containing vegetable juices; liquid and powdered beverage mixes; water, mineral water, sparkling water, drinking water with vitamins, and other nonalcoholic drinks; soft drinks; soda pop beverages; flavoring syrups for making beverages; flavored and unflavored bottled waters; energy drinks; soy-based beverages not being milk substitutes; soy drinks and soy-based beverages; nut milk; nut juice." - Class: 32

"Financial services, namely, debit, credit and stored-value card services; charitable fund raising services." - Class: 36
"Communication services, namely, transmitting streamed and downloadable audio and video entertainment programming via computer, satellite and communications networks; audio entertainment broadcasting and transmission; subscription audio and video entertainment broadcasting and transmission via computer, satellite and communications networks; electronic and digital transmission of voice, data, information, images, signals and messages; providing online chat rooms, bulletin boards and community forums for the transmission of messages among computer users concerning entertainment, music, concerts, videos, radio, television, film, news, sports, games and cultural events; delivery of messages by electronic transmission; provision of connectivity services and access to electronic communications networks, for transmission or reception of audio, video or multimedia content; Providing multiple user dedicated access to the Internet; Broadcasting and downloading service that allows users to playback, sample, download, store, create playlists and stream music, videos, movies, games and entertainment related programming over computers, wireless devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), telephones, and digital listening and playback devices; transmission of electronic gift cards and greeting cards." - Class: 38

"Entertainment services, namely, the organization, production, and presentation of lectures in the fields of news, politics, current events, human interest, comedy shows, concerts, sporting events; conducting of personal appearances by television personalities, movie stars, music celebrities, and sports celebrities for entertainment purposes; Publishing and production of musical and sound recordings; providing information in the fields of news and current events in the fields of health and wellness, music, travel, business, politics, economics, arts and leisure activities, human interest via communications networks; providing information in the fields of sports, and arts and leisure activities via communications networks; providing non-downloadable, pre-recorded music via communications networks; providing articles, non-downloadable movies and non-downloadable television programs in the fields of music, video, radio, television, news current events, sports, games, cultural events, comedy, drama, children's content, documentaries, current, planned, and historical offerings of music, books, television, and movies, celebrities entertainment, and

Continued to page 21



Tourists take a boat around Inle Lake. Photo: Kaung Htet

Draft tourism management plan for Inle Lake released to public

ZAW WIN THAN
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A DRAFT destination management plan aimed at ensuring inclusive and sustainable development at one of the country's top tourist destinations has been released.

The plan for Inle Lake and the surrounding hill areas was developed by the Myanmar Institute for Integrated Development (MIID) with support from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. It was presented to industry representatives at the Myanmar Tourism Federation earlier this month.

"Inle Lake is our natural heritage ... We should make a collective push to maintain our landmarks," Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung said.

The plan aims to provide guidance and support to private sector, local

MILLION US\$

7.3

Estimated cost of projects in the draft Inle Lake tourism management plan released earlier this month

communities and government departments, both central and regional. It was developed through consultations, interviews, focus group discussions and workshops.

Costed at almost US\$7.3 million, the plan contains nine strategies, each featuring a number of projects. These

include the development of the Inle Lake Hotel Zone master plan, a boat traffic management plan, wastewater systems, support for the trekking industry and the establishment of a home-stay program.

The creation of destination management plans for major tourist attractions was a major recommendation of the Tourism Master Plan, which was launched last year.

The Inle Lake region is one of Myanmar's four flagship tourism destinations and received at least 250,000 visitor arrivals during 2013-14, according to the MIID.

The plan covers a 19,000-square-kilometre (7340-square-mile) area - stretching from Pindaya in the north and Loikaw in the south to Kalaw in the west and Hopong in the east - that is home to an estimated 1.4 million people.

Agencies to face tougher penalties for trafficking

Job agencies that traffic workers get off lightly under existing laws, MPs told

HTOO THANT
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A NEW law to protect Myanmar migrant workers was submitted to parliament last week, with stronger penalties for human trafficking. Deputy Minister for Labour Daw Win Maw Tun told parliament on October 15 that the updated law had been framed with advice from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

It will amend a 1999 law she said was "no longer suitable".

The amendments focus on punishments for agencies that traffic workers to foreign countries. Under the

previous law, those found guilty of trafficking faced up to seven years' imprisonment, but the lack of minimum sentences meant most received sentences of less than one year.

The new law would create two offences: one for trafficking in women and children, punishable with a jail term of 10 years to life imprisonment, and another for trafficking men, punishable by five to 10 years' prison.

In preparing the draft law, the ministry had conducted workshops attended by international organisations and experts from the Philippines, as well as the ministries of home affairs, foreign affairs, and immigration and population. The Union Attorney

General's Office, the Myanmar Overseas Employment Agencies Federation and social organisations were also asked to give input, she said.

U Thein Nyunt, Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Thingangyun, said some employment agencies were earning a great deal of money by sending Myanmar workers abroad as illegal migrants or even victims of human trafficking, despite claims that they were sending the workers legally. The new law would provide more effective protection, he said.

Captain Min Naing of the police force's anti-trafficking unit said the new law could help to raise awareness of human trafficking offences.

- Translation by Zar Zar Soe

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Kyauktada Township, Yangon,
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Dated: 27 October 2014

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Kyauktada Township, Yangon,
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
Dated: 27 October 2014

Continued from page 20

arts and leisure activities via communications networks; music publishing services; publishing of music, articles, movies and television programs via communications networks; broadcasting of movies and television programs via communications networks; music production services; entertainment services, namely, providing reviews of music and commentary and articles about music." - Class 41

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U Kyi Win Associates
for **Starbucks Corporation d/b/a Starbucks Coffee Company**
P.O. Box No. 26, Yangon.
Phone: 372416
Dated: 27th October, 2014

Views

Lethal weapons, for the wrong reasons



ROGER MITTON

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IT helps to get a few things straight from the start. First, this region's dominant power is now China.

And the United States, Japan and India do not like it one bit. So the trio of heavyweights are collaborating to mitigate their most serious concerns about the Red Dragon.

While these mainly relate to Beijing's attempts to occupy disputed territories that it claims belong to China, they also cover other security issues and a desire to reduce their large trade deficits with China.

As this US-India-Japan cooperation grows ever tighter, the threesome are trying to draw the countries of Southeast Asia into their China-containment orbit.

And no countries are being wooed more assiduously than Myanmar and Vietnam.

It is understandable, given their strategic locations and long borders with China – Vietnam's is a hefty 1306 kilometres, while Myanmar's is almost twice as long at 2204km.

Right now, in terms of keeping a handle on China's rise, it is Vietnam that gets most attention from the new US-India-Japan triumvirate.

Again it is understandable, since Vietnam's long coastline abuts the South China Sea, and no part of the world is host to more volatile territorial disputes than those troublesome waters.

The most intransigent and volatile conflicts of all are between China and Vietnam over the sovereignty rights to strategic island archipelagos that sit amid lucrative fishing grounds and rich undersea oil and gas fields.

There was nearly a major flare-up in May, when, as part of its relentless claim to over 90 percent of the South China Sea, Beijing stationed an oil rig well inside Vietnam's maritime exclusion zone.

Hanoi went apoplectic and sent small patrol boats to the area, which

achieved nothing; the rig stayed until Beijing was ready to move it.

Vietnam then appealed for outside help. That's when the trio flocked to its side, all the while insisting it was just bolstering Vietnam's defences. Of course, it had nothing to do with containing China.

And the moon is made of cheese and U Ne Win was an economic genius.

In reality, all three are dashing into action because they view Vietnam as the only Southeast Asian nation with the belief, the determination, the military prowess and the willingness to take on Beijing.

After all, Vietnam's armed forces, which have fought many times already with China, including a catastrophic 1979 border war, are, according to most military analysts, the strongest in the region.

The ruling communist regime has increased its defence spending by 130 percent from 2003 to 2012, making most of its purchases from Russia.

In the long run, of course, it cannot prevail against the giant to the north, but that will not deter the Vietnamese, whose inbred anti-Chinese sentiment is so intense that little can shake it.

The problem, however, is that while regionally big and tough, Hanoi's military machine is not equipped with the most modern hardware, especially not in terms of maritime defence materiel.

And that is precisely the sector that is critical in Hanoi's face-off with Beijing over its territories in the South China Sea, or what Vietnam calls the East Sea.

So, step forward Washington, Tokyo and New Delhi – all now inking deals to boost Vietnam's naval forces.

Recently, the most significant has been America's decision this month to partially lift a ban on the sale of lethal weapons to Hanoi that has been in place since the Vietnam War ended in 1975.

It was a shocking move, given that Vietnam is run by a brutal communist dictatorship that shows no respect for human rights, nor any intent to peacefully evolve toward a multiparty democracy.

Indeed, the use of the term "peaceful evolution" by academics, journalists and other professionals has often led to their prosecution and subsequent jailing.

As the US academic Joshua

Kurlantzick, who backs the lifting of the ban, admitted, "It's true that Vietnam's government has increasingly cracked down on dissent of all types over the past five years."

Of course, in typical Orwellian fashion, in order to justify its shameful action, Washington argued that black is white, namely that despite evidence to the contrary, it claimed Hanoi has decreased, rather than increased, its crackdown.

And the US asserted that it wants to encourage this trajectory by agreeing to sell lethal weapons to Hanoi – exactly what the country's pro-democracy activists and harassed journalists need.

Of course, since it knows full well that the main public justification for lifting the arms ban is preposterous, Washington has conceded that a secondary reason is to upgrade Vietnam's maritime defence forces.

It does not add that the upgrade and the lethal weaponry are for use against China, because, well, we all know that already.

Beijing certainly knows it and wasted no time in berating Washington over this provocative, hypocritical and frankly counterproductive move.

An article in the *People's Daily*, Beijing's official newspaper, said, "The input of weaponry is a clear extension of America's interference with the balance of power in the region."

It rightly noted that the lifting of the arms ban would damage regional stability and do nothing to help solve the sovereignty disputes.

Furthermore, it added, "America's policy is not even-handed. While easing the embargo on Vietnam, it maintains its ban on arms sales to China and limits the export of other high-tech products."

It is galling to admit that Beijing is right in this matter, and even more galling that the US action will neither deter China nor give hope to the fledgling pro-democracy movement in Vietnam.

Indeed, since the lifting of the ban, Beijing has continued to ramp up land reclamation projects, including the construction of a military airfield, on islands in the South China Sea over which Hanoi claims sovereignty.

So really, Washington's rash move has changed nothing – except that the potential for military conflict in the region has markedly increased.

Kayin State's ar Reunification o

The formation of the Kawthoolei Armed Forces hints at divi



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ON October 13, senior officials from four major Kayin armed groups jointly released an announcement saying they had agreed to reunify by forming the Kawthoolei Armed Forces (KAF). The KAF would operate based on the four principles laid down by national hero Saw Ba U Gyi, they said, adding that they would fight under a single Kayin flag and work together with other ethnic armed groups to gain a genuine federal union.

This could give the impression that momentum is building behind reunification and consolidation of Kayin armed groups. In truth, a closer look reveals signs of a deeper split among the Kayin.

The four groups are the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the Karen National Defense Organisation (KNDO), the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA) and the KNU/KNLA Peace Council.

The KNLA and KNDO are the armed wings of the KNU. The KNLA's deputy chief of staff, Saw Baw Kyaw Heh – the son of the late former KNU chair, Saw Tar Ma Lar Baw – signed the agreement as a representative of the group. Saw Baw Kyaw Heh is also commander of KNLA Brigade 5.

The KNDO is described informally as the Kayin police force. Saw Der Nah Mya, who is son of the late former KNU chair Saw Bo Mya, signed the agreement as a representative of the KNDO's chief of staff.

The leaders of the KNU's central committee called a meeting shortly after the announcement was released. They then issued their own announcement signed by the head of the KNU's Defence Department, Saw



Members of the Democratic Karen Benevolent

Roger Khin.

The announcement said the KNU is working for the reunification of Karen armed forces under the leadership of its chief of staff, General Saw Jonny, but that it had not authorised the announcement from the four Kayin armed groups.

The announcement said the KNU will continue to resolve its political challenges through political means.

The KAF agreement was created by three separate forces within three of the four groups – in each case without authorisation.

Lamenting the loss of Yangon's prized public property

STUART DEED

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IT starts out small – a little creep of private property onto public land. Maybe it's a generator sitting on a pavement or a parking space blocked with tyres. But across the city, these small yet common incidents have combined to create a large problem.

Once it wasn't hard to make a case for generators being placed on public space. When there were fewer cars, this space wasn't at such a premium. While times have changed, the generators have not been removed to private property. Instead, new parking spots have been carved out and roads widened around them, much to the pedestrian's disadvantage.

Acclaimed author and Yangon Heritage Trust founder Thant Myint-U touched on this recently in a piece for the *Irrawaddy*, titled "Polishing Myanmar's Colonial Gem".

While his advocacy has mostly focused on conserving historic buildings and neighbourhoods, Thant Myint-U highlighted the need to save public spaces – particularly parkland – from commercial development, and make it easier for visitors and residents to get around on foot.

"What will also make Yangon a much healthier and happier place is to protect and expand public spaces generally, especially green areas, and to broaden the pavements and make walking easy," he wrote.

"The Inya and Kandawgyi lakes should also be central to the vision of the city going forward and the areas around them will require careful management and protection from commercial development. Walking downtown is now becoming increasingly difficult and the narrowing of pavements is a mistake that needs to be reversed."

There are some obvious examples of public parkland being leased to

developers on long-term contracts, including near the areas Thant Myint-U mentioned.

But another way in which much public land is lost for private gain is through car yards being run from the city's streets.

Given the premium on parking space – and the consequences when more parking is created – I'm unable to fathom why Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) or the police fail to take action against these operations. It's not as if the owners try to hide the fact they have parked a fleet of vehicles on the roadside.

Public car trading yards do exist – there's a huge yard near the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry on Min Ye Kyaw Swa Road in Lanmadaw township.

A former yard at Hantharwaddy near Junction Square has ostensibly been closed down. You wouldn't think so, though, if you drove in

the back entrance to Junction Square – the area remains a thriving dealership.

It may seem that the core of the illegal car yard issue is an overabundance of vehicles in Yangon – too many for the public to buy or to store legitimately. More likely, though, it's just cheaper and more convenient to keep them on public land.

Another issue is residents and businesses commandeering parking spaces, normally through the placement of a chair or tyre in the space. The perpetrator is usually the owner or occupier of a nearby ground floor apartment. This is illegal under municipal law but little has been done to stop it. One resident became so fed up by it they created a Facebook page, titled "Stop Illegal Parking in Yangon", to which they post photos of double-parked cars and blocked parking spaces.

When YCDC has tried to crack down on the misuse of public

space, it has come across as misdirected. Most notable are its regular campaigns against mobile street vendors, who endure trying conditions to make meagre profits. At the same time, its parks and gardens department leases out large tracts of parkland to private companies.

Unfortunately, once public space has been suborned for private use, either on a large or small scale, it is difficult to get back. Residents should be able to enjoy walking along the streets unimpeded by generators, illegally parked cars and, in most areas, sidewalk-blocking vendors operating outside designated markets. Similarly, we should not have to see the beauty of the city's tree-lined avenues and boulevards, such as U Wisara, Inya, Natmauk and University, sacrificed so readily for the benefit of drivers or the owners of fancy restaurants.

The people of Yangon deserve better.

med groups: r separation?

sions within the major Kayin groups – not just the KNU



Army pose for a photo during an aid donation ceremony in 2013. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

Saw Mei A Sein, another son of Saw Tar Malar Baw, and the KNU vice chair, Naw Zipporah Sein, were quoted in the media as saying they supported the agreement signed by the four armed groups.

In short, the agreement was signed by groups that do not agree with the policies of the KNU's central committee, including leader Saw Mutu Say Pho and chief of staff Gen Saw Jonny. Given their announcement and the response from Naw Zipporah Sein and Saw Mei A Sein, it is clear there is a wider and deeper split within the KNU.

But the problems are not only within the KNU.

DKBA chief of staff Major General Saw Lar Pwe was quoted as saying that he was concerned that the agreement could result in further conflict. Even though the agreement had his signature on it, he said he didn't know about the document until it was released to the public.

Colonel Saw San Aung, the DKBA's

tactical commander, has widely publicised the DKBA's signing of the announcement. It appears that he signed it on behalf of his chief of staff, although the DKBA is yet to issue any formal announcement.

Meanwhile, the KNU/KNLA Peace Council leader Saw Htein Maung responded angrily to the agreement, saying it did not reflect the official views of his organisation. It turns out that KNU/KNLA Peace Council member Lieutenant Tiger signed it without authorisation.

In conclusion, the KAF agreement was created by three separate forces within three of the four groups – in each case without authorisation.

Rather than unification, "The Agreement of Unification of Karen National Armed Groups" has come to symbolise the deep splits within Kayin State. It will neither help achieve a federal union nor benefit the Kayin people, and bodes poorly for the peace process.

- Translation by Zar Zar Soe

Special rapporteur underscores need for new rights resolution

The international community needs a resolution to keep the pressure on Nay Pyi Taw

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THE United Nations General Assembly is in full swing, with the representatives debating, among other pressing issues, whether to pass another resolution on Myanmar. As part of that process, the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, has recently published her country report, which she will soon present to the UN General Assembly.

While the special rapporteur takes care to highlight the "far-reaching reforms" that have taken place since the government came to office in early 2011, she emphasises the "possible signs of backtracking" that are becoming increasingly evident.

Building on the years of distinguished work carried out by her predecessor, Tomás Ojea Quintana, the special rapporteur's report represents a comprehensive and damning indictment of the situation of human rights and democracy in the country. It is in stark contrast to last month's speech by the foreign minister – a former member of the military rather than a human rights expert – who assured the General Assembly that all human rights issues were being addressed and that no new resolution was needed.

Naturally, the special rapporteur couches her criticisms in diplomatic language, but the message echoes the forceful declaration issued by more than 650 civil society participants at the recent Civil Society Organisations Forum held in Yangon: namely, that not only is there still a long way to go, but many things have not changed at all and in some areas the situation is rapidly deteriorating.

While highly critical, her report is the epitome of principled objectivity, always referring back to international human rights standards as an authority and benchmark. The special rapporteur also takes a solution-oriented approach, making specific, concrete, practical recommendations to the government. Coming from a UN human rights heavyweight, such

words lend significant moral force to the increasingly depressing discourse on the human rights situation in Myanmar.

It remains to be seen whether the international community will sit up and start committing to concrete actions that reflect the realities on the ground. While individual countries seem to be blinkered in their single-minded focus on the economic and geopolitical opportunities that engagement with Myanmar offers, there is hope that the General Assembly will adopt a more principled, people-oriented approach, and maintain pressure on the government.

Neither civil society nor the special rapporteur want to be critical for the sake of it. They are neither "peace spoilers" nor acting upon selfish or subversive interests.

Will the international community choose to ignore the litany of growing concerns that the special rapporteur outlines in her report? Can it continue to turn a blind eye to the enduring violence and conflict in Kachin and Shan states, or, more recently, Kayin State? To the grave human rights abuses – including extra-judicial killings, torture, rape and other sexual violence, forced labour, forced displacement, and arbitrary arrest and detention – perpetuated with impunity in ethnic conflict areas, for the most part by the unreformed Myanmar army? To the spike in hate speech, discrimination and religious violence flaring up in diverse parts of the country, or the appalling humanitarian

crisis unfolding in Rakhine State, particularly for the beleaguered Rohingya? To the upsurge in illegal forced land evictions, and the devastating social, economic and environmental implications of countless development projects for local communities, ethnic peoples and other marginalised groups?

Lack of rule of law and access to justice. The widespread abuse of fair trial rights by a non-independent, corrupt and incompetent judiciary. The undemocratic 2008 constitution, which institutionalises military power. Fears regarding the legitimacy and fairness of the upcoming national elections. The increased stifling of civil society space, including the continual arrests of human rights defenders, activists, journalists and peaceful protestors. All of these should be issues of concern.

The objective should of course be to improve the country, to advance the reforms, and to bring about genuine and long-lasting democracy, peace and reconciliation. To ensure that human rights are protected and respected, that the rule of law prevails, and that all people – regardless of who they are – can enjoy and participate in the future development of the country. Neither civil society nor the special rapporteur want to be critical for the sake of it. They are neither "peace spoilers" nor acting upon selfish or subversive interests.

However, until real change is allowed to take place, pressure must be maintained on the government. Another General Assembly resolution is one of the international community's strongest points of leverage, and, sadly, it is one that they must use once again. The special rapporteur's report is an essential and invaluable part of this process and must not be ignored.

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Robert Finch and Alex Moodie are political and human rights analysts with Burma Partnership, a network of organisations throughout the Asia-Pacific region advocating and mobilising a movement for democracy and human rights in Myanmar.



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Business

Rice brokers stop buying as unsold stockpiles rise



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A DRAMATIC fall in the volume of rice exports has dragged prices downward and threatens to drive small farmers off the land, farmers' advocates have warned.

Until just weeks ago, rice exports to China via the border crossing at Muse in Shan State could reach 3500 tonnes a day. But following China's seizure of rice from merchants accused of smuggling, daily rice exports at Muse have plummeted to around 25 tonnes, leaving many merchants with unsold stock and unwilling to buy more from farmers.

Nationwide exports have fallen by half since August, when exports hit 100,000 tonnes a month. As a result, local rice prices have tumbled, leading to fears that prices will fall further still, inflicting heavy losses on farmers who can no longer turn a profit, industry observers say.

Emata paddy prices have now fallen to near the break-even level of K300,000 per 100 baskets, down from a high of K470,000 when the China trade was still booming.

U Thein Aung, chair of the Myanmar Freedom Farmers' League, says making a living through rice growing is getting harder than ever, causing many small farmers to sell. Others are in search of financing after spending a lot on rice production inputs such as fertiliser in anticipation of a strong Chinese market.

"We've told the government we're prepared to pay up to 5 percent interest on a six-month loan," said U Thein Aung. "A lot of small farmers could leave the business if they can no longer survive. At these prices, I don't think many farmers can afford to invest in next summer's crop. The situation is really terrible."

In the past year, many farmers working five acres or less have sold their land and gone to work in big cities as garment or construction workers, street vendors or trishaw drivers, he said.

The Freedom Farmers League also submitted a petition calling for action to the hluttaw on October 20.

The Chinese market has played an outsized role for Myanmar rice exports in the past two years. It went from receiving almost no imports

from Myanmar in 2011 to purchasing 59 percent of the country's exports in 2013, according to a World Bank report released earlier this year.

Commerce minister U Win Myint told *The Myanmar Times* last week that the government had been negotiating with China to ease the blockage. While the rice trade is legal on the Myanmar side of the border, the problem has apparently arisen amid allegations of illegality on the Chinese side. Legalising it will require a health agreement with China, among other measures.

"We've already signed a quality control agreement and I hope we can soon proceed to the next steps," he said.

'I don't think many farmers can afford to invest in next summer's crop. The situation is really terrible.'

U Thein Aung

Myanmar Freedom Farmers League

Joint secretary of the Myanmar Rice Federation U Lu Maw Myint Maung agreed that if paddy prices fell much lower, farmers could quit, despite measures brought in over the past three years to strengthen the sector, such as improved financing, policy liberalisation and more aggressive export efforts. "If farmers leave, the rice industry and export levels could fall again. All the effort we have invested would be in vain," he said.

U Lu Maw Myint Maung added, "If we can't export at least 100,000 tonnes a month in the exporting season, prices will not be stable. Right now the export volume is 50,000 tonnes."

The sudden collapse threatens a promising rebound in the rice industry.

U Lu Maw Myint Maung said the government should come in to support the industry. Many rice traders are already sitting on large stocks intended for the China market, so have little interest in buying the new crop.

The Chinese embassy in Yangon has not yet responded to queries on the issue.

State energy firms to p



Energy production will improve as state-owned enterprises get better, said Minister of Energy U Zay Yar Aung. Photo: Kaung Htet



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THE Ministry of Energy is planning to pursue more joint ventures with foreign companies, as senior government officials have urged state-owned enterprises to professionalise or risk being reformed.

The energy sector includes a prominent set of state-owned firms, but tentative steps to modernise through forming joint ventures with foreign firms have already begun.

The fuel distribution and retail arm of Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise plans to partner with a foreign firm to improve its operations, while Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) and Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise are also planning to work with foreign firms to upgrade certain operations.

Energy minister U Zay Yar Aung said these partnerships are the first step in eventually transitioning the state-owned firms to becoming publicly owned firms – though added it will take some time for this to happen.

"It is difficult to change directly from being a state-owned enterprise to being a public company," he said in

an address at a conference on natural resource management in Nay Pyi Taw on October 16. "But we're implementing reform to move toward [having] public companies in this sector."

Ministry of Finance and Revenue deputy director general U Zaw Naing said the number of state-owned firms has been dropping, declining to about 40 businesses under 14 ministries after 2012, though had it previously been 47 state-owned firms under 18 ministries.

State-owned enterprises can be slow to develop business and come to depend on the state budget, said U Zay Yar Aung.

"We don't have enough experience on our own to change businesses – it is a big challenge for us," he said. U Zay Yar Aung added it may take 10 years to fully change the way the state-owned enterprises do business and see them fully transition from being state-owned.

Senior government officials, including Minister for the President's Office U Soe Thane and Finance Minister U Win Shein, said earlier this month that there will be some changes coming to state-owned firms, particularly at those that manage to consistently lose money. Some Pyidaungsu Hluttaw members have also openly criticised state enterprises which consistently lose money, noting only a few – mostly in the

natural resource sector – are able to show consistent profits.

Several state-owned firms in the energy sector have already taken steps to seek foreign partners. A tender for an international firm to join MPPE in its monopoly of distributing jet fuel attracted about 24 interested bidders, though local media said a shortlist was released last month with four bidders left. *Mizzima* also reported on October 14 there are nine firms shortlisted in a tender to assist MOGE with professionalising in drilling, pipeline and seismic services.

Nomita Nair, partner at legal firm Berwin Leighton Paisner, which is among the nine shortlisted firms, said government ministries often have limited numbers of people and therefore turn to consulting firms.

For the energy sector as a whole, Ms Nair said she advocates for a comprehensive approach that takes into account the range of energy industries in the country.

"From a legal point of view, a policy point of view, I see a lot of talk about the upstream side, but ... a lot of focus really needs to be made on the downstream and power-generation side," she said.

It is also important to strike a balance between revenue-generating exports and using domestic petroleum on the local market to create jobs and factories, she added.

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Total talks Myanmar’s energy future in an exclusive interview

BUSINESS 27



Inle tourism drives rapidly price increase along its shores

PROPERTY 34

Exchange Rates (October 24 close)		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Euro	K1255	K1265
Malaysia Ringitt	K302	K303
Singapore Dollar	K781	K785
Thai Baht	K30	K31
US Dollar	K996	K999

rofessionalise



U Zay Yar Aung also said that while the Ministry of Energy is open to joint ventures with foreign partners in the country to export petroleum abroad, it has prioritised ensuring there is enough oil and gas earmarked for domestic consumption.

“When there is sufficient oil and gas for local use, we will sell it

outside Myanmar. But we want to sell high-end products rather than raw materials. This is the president’s latest policy,” he said.

Some of the present contracts require Myanmar to export its oil and gas production, though this may change in the future. – *Additional reporting by Jeremy Mullins, translation by Thiri Min Htun*

China spearheads large regional development bank

Myanmar is one of 21 signatories to establish a Beijing-led counterpart to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank

CHINA and 20 other countries including Myanmar moved forward toward setting up an Asian infrastructure lender seen as a counterweight to Western-backed international development banks.

The signatories put their names to a memorandum of understanding to establish the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) at a ceremony in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on October 24.

The institution, whose development has been driven by China and which is widely expected to have initial capital of US\$50 billion, it intended to address the region’s burgeoning demand for transportation, dams, ports and other facilities, officials say.

“In China we have a folk saying,” said Chinese President Xi Jinping. “If you would like to get rich, build roads first’. And I believe that is a very vivid description of the very importance of infrastructure to economic development.”

China’s rise to become the world’s second-largest economy has been accompanied by a desire to play a greater role in international organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the ADB, which have been dominated by countries from Europe as well as the United States and Japan.

But other than China, among Asia’s 10 largest economies only India and Singapore signed the AIIB memorandum, with three of the top five – Japan, South Korea and Indonesia – notably absent.

Of the 10 ASEAN members, all of them but one signed the memorandum of understanding, including Myanmar, with Indonesia the singular exception, according to *The China Daily* newspaper.

The Japanese head of the Asian Development Bank, another regional lender, said on October 19 that questions remained over the AIIB’s structure and it needed to adhere to international standards when it begins operations.

“Our position about AIIB is first that it is understandable because there is a very big financing need in the region,” ADB president Takehiko Nakao told reporters.

‘In China we have a folk saying. If you would like to get rich, build roads first.’

Xi Jinping
President of China

But he said he was still awaiting details about the bank such as membership, shareholdings, the location of its headquarters and who will head it.

The Japanese government has expressed concern, while the United States is reportedly fiercely opposed to the AIIB.

Mr Xi was reassuring after the signing. “For the AIIB, its operation needs to follow multilateral rules and procedures,” he said.

“We have also to learn from the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank and other existing multilateral development institutions in their good practices.”

The signatories will negotiate the bank’s specifics in the coming months and expect to finish by the end of next year, according to a statement from Singapore’s finance ministry.

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim said in July that estimates for infrastructure needs in developing countries are at least \$1 trillion annually, far beyond the current capacity of his institution and private investment to handle.

“We think that the need for new investments in infrastructure is massive and we think that we can work very well and cooperatively with any of these new banks once they become a reality,” Mr Kim told reporters in Beijing. – *AFP*

NAY PYI TAW

Hilton opens first hotel

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US hotel giant Hilton Worldwide opened its first Myanmar hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on October 17, with four more hotels planned for the country.

The US\$50 million hotel is the first of Hilton’s planned five hotels in Myanmar that are set to open by 2017 in partnership with local conglomerate Eden Group.

“The reason why we work with Hilton is that it has huge expertise and connections in marketing in the international market. For us, that kind of thing is not possible to do,” said Eden Group chair U Chit Khaing.

“We just know how to offer good service, and not more than that. So we need to work with an international business group.”

As a government city, Nay Pyi Taw draws relatively few tourists though receives many business visitors. U Chit Khaing said he is not worried the

hotel will have trouble turning a profit in the long term, as he believes in Hilton’s expertise.

“However, we expect we will face a loss for the first one-and-a-half years,” he said.

Hilton Worldwide Southeast Asia vice president William Costley said he thinks Nay Pyi Taw has lots of potential as the future of development in Myanmar.

“51 years ago we started our first hotel in Japan, and people also asked the same question, why we are there,” he said.

Hilton Nay Pyi Taw will employ about 400 people including some foreign staff, and sits on the former home of Eden Group’s Thingaha Garden hotel. It will have some 202 rooms, including two large presidential suites, and an Olympic-sized pool as well as a range of other amenities.

“Eden has follow Hilton’s rules 100 percent, included the employees’ living standards [when building and operating the hotel],” said U Chit Khaing.

The hotel will be completely run by Hilton, though Eden Group is involved in other aspects of the business.


Hilton Worldwide joins two other international brands, Park Royal and Kempinski, which are also operating in the capital.

Hilton and Eden Group also plan a further four hotels in Bagan, Inle, Mandalay and Ngapali, all to be complete by 2017.

5

Hotels Hilton Worldwide and Eden Group have planned in Myanmar by 2017

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Trade deficit worthwhile to fund future growth



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THE expanding trade deficit is not a large problem because much of the increase in imports are for construction material and machinery needed to fuel future growth, according to Ministry of Commerce experts.

Trade volumes totalled about US\$15 billion so far this fiscal year, which started April 1, of which about \$9 billion were imports and \$6 billion were exports, ministry statistics show.

Ministry of Commerce economist and advisor U Maung Aung said exports are up about \$400 million over the same period, though imports have increased by \$2 billion.

As long as the growth in imports are directed to productive economic sectors that support further economic growth, a trade deficit is not necessarily problematic, he said.

"We should give priority to the country's infrastructure development, therefore it is impossible to

reduce imports," he told *The Myanmar Times*.

"Importing items used for investment is also a good sign for the country," he added. Many of the goods are imported for use in tax-free projects like SEZs, and some, like machinery, will later be exported when no longer required, meaning some of the figures will cancel out.

About 46 percent of the imports are for investment goods, a category which includes machinery, vehicles and telecoms equipment. Another 35pc are fuels and materials like palm oil which are also important for production, the figures show.

Although officials contend the rise in imports is crucial to boost

production and economic growth, some also say they are looking at ways to reduce the gap.

Trade Promotion Department director U Win Myint said the Ministry of Commerce is focusing on ways to increase export values by adding more value to locally produced raw materials and planning trade promotion events in other countries.

Natural gas exports currently make up the largest portion of exports, worth \$3.2 billion last year with opening of a pipeline to China. However, exports of primary goods such as rubber, fish and timber logs have all decreased this year.

U Win Myint said farmers and traders need education to boost quality control so they can take advantage of opportunities in advanced markets like the EU and Japan.

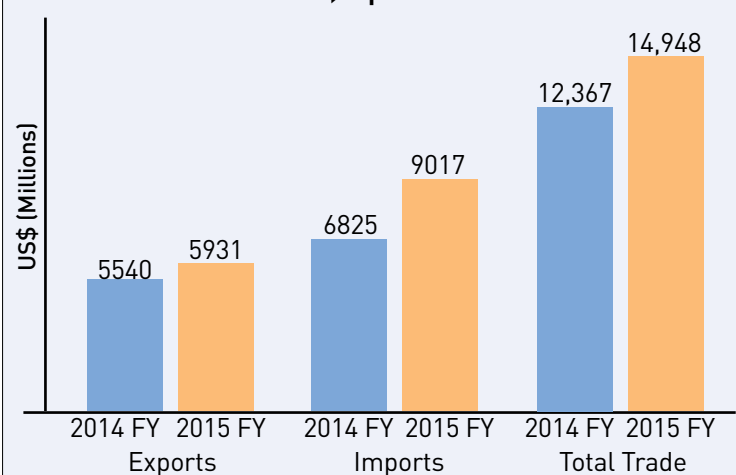
"Exports to new markets won't be a roaring trade from the start, these countries have stringent requirements on hygiene," he said. "It's not like China and India which buy goods of every sort of quality, but these advanced countries offer higher prices."

The commerce minister has said he expects total trade volumes to hit \$30 billion this fiscal year.



Trade at the Myawaddy-Mae Sot gate. Photo: Kaung Htet

Bilateral Trade, April 1 to October 17



Source : Ministry of Commerce

PERCENT

46

Proportion of imports that are considered investment goods such as machinery and telecoms equipment



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Sun shines on Magwe solar power project

PYAE THET PHYO

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THAI firm Green Earth Power Company has signed an agreement with the government to move forward on its plans to spend US\$350 million building a 220-megawatt solar-power generating station near Minbu in Magwe Region.

The facility will sit on 850 acres that are not suitable for agriculture, and will take three years to complete, said Green Earth managing director U Aung Thiha.

"The first stage will see 50 megawatts of electric power produced by March 2016, with the total development time lasting three years," he said.

Green Power is eager to be located in an area with lots of year-round sunshine as well as close connections with large transmission lines. Solar projects have been successful in places like Japan and Thailand, and there is no reason they cannot also succeed in Myanmar, according to U Aung Thiha.

"We believe this project will succeed because of our international experience and global standard - though there will be a little bit of difficulty because it's the first time [building in Myanmar]," he said. "It's difficult transporting things that weigh over 30 tonnes, for example."

A department of the Ministry of Electric Power and Green Earth Company signed a contract governing the project on October 16 in Nay Pyi Taw, after inking an earlier memorandum of understanding on the deal last year. The agreement covers 30 years of energy production, though the tariff is still being negotiated and has not been announced.

"This is a test," said U Aung Thiha. "If it succeeds, we will get trust from the government and can cooperate in other places." The project will also add lots of jobs to the local economy, he added. - Translated by Khant Lin Oo

EXCLUSIVE

Total taps into petroleum industry

THE domestic subsidiary of French oil and gas giant Total has signed new contracts to expand its existing Yadana offshore project. Contracts to develop platforms for the nearby Badamyar project were inked with Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries and SapuraAcergy of Malaysia in Yangon on October 17.

The Myanmar Times' Aung Shin spoke with Total E&P Myanmar general manager Xavier Pr  el on Total's operations in Myanmar and the future of the domestic oil and gas sector.

Could you tell us more about October 17's signing ceremony?

It is a very important step for Total in Myanmar because we are developing a new phase of the Yadana gas field, extending its gas production as it plateaus. Two platforms; one will be a wellhead platform for gas production at Badamyar, which was discovered a few years ago. The other big platform, a Low Compression Platform, will be for production, as pressure is decreasing all the time.

Today, the Yadana project is producing natural gas for the domestic market in Myanmar, also for Thailand. It is an important project intending to create more gas production for the long term.

What is the current production rate of the Yadana project?

We are producing around 800 million cubic feet of natural gas per day. So, we are producing around 40 percent of gas production in Myanmar.

The first contract for the Yadana project was signed in 1992 and we

started gas production in 1998, so the Yadana project has been ongoing ... I think we can go beyond 2020, and then the gas production at Yadana will mostly decline.

Of course, new gas discoveries will take time ... Altogether it takes more than 10 years. So you cannot expect significant new gas production before 2020 or 2024. [By then], more or less Yadana gas production will decrease.

A few months ago, Total bought a 40pc intake of offshore block MO-11, which belongs to PTTEP. When are exploration activities going to start?

At the moment we are conducting exploration wells with PTTEP. So far we have done one well. We have now proposed to conduct another program of seismic exploration, but this is not yet decided. We are discussing it with MOGE, and we need to do some more seismic programs in order to get better assessments. Though we believe it has potential.

Total was awarded one block, the YWB block, in last year's offshore bidding round. When do you expect to sign the contract [governing the block]?

As soon as possible, we are ready. I hope it will be this year. We are just waiting for the minister's decision to go ahead.

Once you have signed the contract for YWB, how fast will you start exploration activities?

We are hoping that the contract will be

signed in the very near future. We need the urgent signing of the block; [then] we can start seismic campaigns. We need to start seismic activities before the monsoon, so if we do not sign the blocks shortly then there is a risk that you might lose the opportunity to [start a seismic survey] before the monsoon.

Apart from upstream, does Total have any other plans to invest in Myanmar?

We are still very carefully considering the downstream business especially gas stations. Today no decision has been taken, it is too early to speak about that. But at least we are looking at it. And we are also developing an access-to-energy program which means we are selling solar energy lamps for the people who don't have energy. We are now developing it in the Kanpauk area [of Tanintharyi Region]. We have sold 2000 lamps. We are planning to sell more lamps but it is not a commercial enterprise.

Now we see many international companies coming and also many local companies have registered as energy companies. What do you think of the prospects for future competition in Myanmar's oil and gas sector?

I think the future is set for a lot of competition. We have decided to operate only offshore. In offshore, many companies will conduct different programs.

What I believe is competition is very sound, very important for the country because each company has a different view, different geologists. It

is very good to have diverse opinions. It is a kind of very competitive game.

As far as local industry is concerned, we are quite happy that the oil and gas sector is developing. We try as much as we can to develop oil and gas companies working for us through training, through support and [learning] the procedures we are using. We just wish the oil and gas sector developed more. There are many service companies, also many local companies in Myanmar, which I think it is very positive for the oil and gas business. They may become partners of Total in the future.

Total E&P Myanmar is a member of the Multi Stakeholders Group, which is responsible for Myanmar's first report on the industry's transparency due under the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. How do you rate the country's approach to the initiative?

I am very involved in this process. Here in Myanmar, we consistently support a global approach to EITI. We have also been pushing for Myanmar to join. We are very happy that in July

Myanmar was accepted as a candidate. I am personally very confident that Myanmar will meet the challenge of publishing its first EITI Report in early 2016. A lot of good work has been done so far.

There are some complaints by the public and by civil society groups asking for onshore and offshore contracts to be made public. Do you support this view?

I know some of the NGOs are asking for full publication of contracts. As far as Total is concerned, we don't have any problem with that. It is up to the government's decision. In many countries, contracts are public; some are not, such as Myanmar. But what needs to be carefully understood is that there is no need



MORE ON BUSINESS 28

Total E&P Myanmar general manager Xavier Pr  el.
Photo: Zarni Phyo

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U Than Maung, Advocate
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Dated: 27th October, 2014

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U Kyi Win Associates
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P.O. Box No. 26, Yangon.
Phone: 372416
Dated: 27th October, 2014

PARIS

Avuncular Total chief dead in crash

CHRISTOPHE de Margerie had a penchant for cracking a joke, which with his bushy moustache and stout form made him come across more as a favourite uncle than a powerful executive at the helm of petroleum giant Total.

But the jolly business chief, who died in a plane accident in Russia on October 20 aged 63, deftly steered one of the world's biggest oil company through corruption charges and

restructuring in his seven years at the head of the firm.

Affectionately nicknamed “Big Moustache” by staff for his distinctive facial hair, Mr De Margerie took the reins of the company in 2007 after serving as company number two since 1999. His appointment was the logical step for a man who had spent his entire 40-year career at Total, culminating with his appointment as chair in 2010.

He arrived at the top of the company at a period darkened by judicial woes, such as the 2010 conviction for negligence over an environmental disaster caused by the 1999 shipwreck of the Erika oil tanker on France's Atlantic coast. And shortly after being appointed as chief executive, Mr De Margerie found himself handcuffed and in custody for more than 24 hours over charges of corruption in deals with Iran.

Total named Patrick Pouyanne as the firm's new CEO and Thierry Desmaret as its new chair on October 22.

— AFP



Christophe de Margerie.
Photo: AFP

CONTINUED FROM BUSINESS 27

to disclose the full contracts because EITI is about watching the revenues coming from oil and gas activities. For this we don't need to ask [all the companies] to disclose their contracts. We believe that competition in oil and gas is good, and contracts are part of this competition.

We favour no publication of the contracts for competition reasons. Yes of course, if the government of Myanmar decided to disclose the contracts, we have nothing to hide. But the advice of Total is we don't need to do that. Some countries are doing this, some are not. It doesn't change anything. It is like your neighbour, [wanting] to see your neighbour naked. It doesn't have [to do with] anything. Why do you want to see your neighbour naked?

Are you confident the current terms and conditions of the contracts are fair for the country?

Of course, they are fair. Back in 1992 when Total signed, it was the first offshore contract in Myanmar. This contract survives many years, renewed by other companies later on.

This interview has been edited and condensed. It was also conducted before the October 20 death of Total chair Christophe de Margerie.

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Kokang economic zone comes amid speculation on security

SANDAR
LWIN

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PEACE in the countryside may be starting to pay dividends with the further development of Kokang economic zone. After three years of deliberations, Myanmar Investment Commission recognised Kokang as a general economic zone on October 3.

Construction is expected to be completed next year, with operations beginning in 2016, said U Kyaw Swe, secretary of the Kokang Self-administered Zone's government, or leading body.

The zone, which could provide up to 20,000 job opportunities, is the first to be established in a self-administrated region. "That is the result of peace," said U Aung Naing Oo, secretary of the Myanmar Investment Commission.

Backers of the zone want it to challenge neighbouring China in the value-added food production market. The zone is located a scant 23 metres

from the border in the Kon-Kyan and Laukkai townships that constitute the self-administered zone, and is close to the Chinshwehaw border trading gate in Laukkai.

U Aung Naing Oo said the jobs created could help to reduce opium poppy cultivation.

"We authorised the zone to start value-added production of agricultural products, since the region is adjacent to China," he said.

U Kyaw Swe said construction is already 20 percent complete. "The government is inviting investment from China, and has even opened negotiations with some investors."

The 1007-acre compound will host a general trading area, as well as zones for hotels, small and medium-sized industries, as well as the trade of construction materials and agricultural machinery and products.

U Kyaw Swe said Chinese small and medium business were expected to make up the largest group of investors because of longstanding cultural and business ties, but the zone would welcome businesses from elsewhere in Myanmar and other foreign countries.

"Since we are adjacent to China we

hope that Chinese small and medium industries will come and invest here," he said.

Under the legal framework of the zone, most of the agricultural-based, value-added production will be carried out as joint ventures with local firms. However, as the number of potential investors from the Kokang region and other parts of Myanmar are likely to be limited at first, Kokang leaders are pushing for more flexible rules.

"It is quite difficult to get things done following national policies for everything," Kokang government head U Be Sou Chien told *Irrawaddy*. "We want regulations that suit our region."

'We hope that Chinese small and medium industries will come and invest here.'

U Kyaw Swe

Kokang government official

Historically, Kokang has been plagued with unrest, with fighting breaking out in 2009 between the Tatmadaw and an armed group led by U Phone Kyar Shin. But stability has gradually spread since 2011. Nevertheless, potential investors are still cautious, said U Tun Naing, chair of the Kokang Democracy and Unity Party. "The success of the zone is closely linked to the stability of the region," he said.

U Kyaw Swe said economic development is a priority for residents and that this would help the region maintain stability. "Here business is most important to people living in our region. Residents are very eager to enjoy the benefits of this zone," said U Kyaw Swe, who is also head of the Laukkai District General Administration Department, a Ministry of Home Affairs body.

U Be Sou Chien said his government could guarantee security. "We have the army and police. The U Phone group is the only threat, but it is too weak to occupy much territory. The self-administrative government fully guarantees the security of investors and their property," he told *Irrawaddy*.

FDI has doubled on last year

CONTRACTED foreign direct investment (FDI) has doubled in the first half of the 2014-15 fiscal year compared to the same period last year, according to data from the Myanmar Investment Commission.

Some US\$3.6 billion in investment has been approved from April 1 to the end of September, more than double the \$1.6 billion approved in the same period last year. A total of about \$4 billion was approved in the whole of the 2013-14 fiscal year.

Transportation and communications are the areas with the most approved investment, counting for \$1.3 billion or about 30 percent of the total amount.

Several other sectors attracted considerable attention, including over \$800 million approved investment in the oil and gas sector. Real estate attracted about \$600 million, manufacturing about \$400 million and hotels and tourism about \$300 million, the Myanmar Investment Commission's statistics show. These five sectors together compose nearly all of the total \$3.6 billion.

Singapore, China and Britain were the three largest sources of approved FDI during the period.

— Sandar Lwin

Auto firm plans a racetrack

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A PUBLIC company is planning to build a large complex including a race-track, car showroom and guest house on the outskirts of Yangon, according to Myanmar Automobile Manufacturers and Distributors Association chair U Soe Htun.

The complex will be built by the Myanmar Automobile Development Public Company, which has already raised K5 billion (US\$4.95 million) of the estimated K20 million it needs to fund the project, he said.

"The automobile complex will not just sell cars. It will attract people to come see the sports car races," said U Soe Htun. "After we finish the track it will be a place sports cars can race without disturbing the public."

"This complex will be first of its kind in Myanmar and a feature of Yangon," he added.

The complex is planned for about 200 acres in Mingalardon and Hlegu townships. The plot of land alone costs about K3 billion, which will be mortgaged. The project will include an automobile showroom, spare parts stores, car decorating services, a restaurant and guesthouse along with the race track, which will be about 10 acres.

As a public company, the firm intends to raise additional capital through selling shares. Each share costs K10,000 and will be open to all Myanmar citizens, with eventually intentions to list on the planned stock exchange should it come to fruition.

Myanmar Automobile Development Public Company is already in talks with various transportation associations and sports car teams about participation in the venture. The firm has also begun the process of applying for the appropriate licences, he said.

"We have already presented the first draft of the plan," he said. "We will call an international tender for foreign investment [as well as the share issue]."

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 “Brushes for oral hygiene purposes; toothbrushes; electric toothbrushes; vibrating toothbrushes; inter dental brushes; interproximal brushes; interspace brushes; denture brushes; floss and tape for dental purposes; dental flossing aids; toothpicks and toothpick holders; cleaning instruments for oral hygiene purposes; boxes and baths for dentures and artificial teeth; tooth polishing appliances for personal use” - Class: 21

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Dated: 27th October, 2014**TRADE MARK CAUTION**

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for **Brita GmbH**,

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Attorneys-at-Law

INDIA

Dated: 27th October, 2014

World Bank partner looks to counter risks

AYE THIDAR KYAW

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AN arm of the World Bank Group is planning to offer risk insurance on loans to encourage foreign investment to come to Myanmar, said Honda Keiko, executive vice president and CEO of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

The agency is particularly keen to encourage lending to Myanmar in areas such as infrastructure, electricity production and finance, after Myanmar joined MIGA in December 2013, she said. Myanmar has seen a restart to borrowing from the World Bank Group, which includes MIGA, and the Asian Development Bank after a long period of being frozen out under military rule.

“Myanmar is a country at a crossroads and we are eager to support investments that help the country succeed in its transformation,” Ms Honda said in a Yangon interview on October 23.

MIGA provides risk insurance for areas that investors and lenders face in emerging markets, such in areas such as payment transfers and converting



Honda Keiko. Photo: Thiri Lu

foreign exchange, covering breach of contract, threat of expropriation, and war and other disturbances.

The agency is currently involved in projects such as insuring millions of dollars in loans to Japanese banks to an Indonesia hydropower project, aiming to reduce the lenders' exposure to risks from payment transfers

and civil disturbances such as breach of contract for up to 19 years, she said.

“We expect to be able to do the same thing in Myanmar,” said Ms Honda.

Although the government is promoting economic reform aiming for stronger growth, challenges remain in areas such as providing more job opportunities and strengthening the domestic financial sector.

“Investments will create jobs, especially for women, and provide critical infrastructure to help Myanmar realise the benefits of this historic change,” she said.

‘We are eager to support investments that help the country succeed in its transformation.’

Keiko Honda

MIGA CEO

Restaurants must show labels as proof of tax payments

AYE THIDAR KYAW

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RESTAURANTS will be required to mark their receipts with a security label to show customers have paid a 5 percent commercial tax on their meals starting November 1, according to Internal Revenue Department director U Min Htut.

The IRD has already reduced the tax from 10pc to 5pc in 2012 in a bid to improve revenue collection, resulting in a three-fold increase in tax from restaurant revenue, collecting about K2.5 billion from restaurants last year, he said.

“We believe we will reach our target [this year],” he said. “The period April to June has the least income, but the last three months of the fiscal yield the highest income.”

Restaurateurs have been told to collect the tax security labels from IRD offices. The department will charge 10pc of tax in the event of failure to register or report a new business, irregular payments or late statements, said U Min Htut.

The small labels will be affixed to

PERCENT

5

Commercial tax on restaurant bills

restaurant bills as stickers, and are being produced in value ranging from K50 to K10,000. IRD officials will conduct checks to find restaurants that do not affix the labels to receipts, showing tax payment. The security labels are to be obtained from the IRD.

In addition, restaurant owners also have to pay tax on their net income, after allowances for materials, wages and rent.

Some restaurant owners have complained of excessive surveillance by the Tax Advisory Board, and for having to pay garbage removal and other charges.

Meanwhile, tax officials said they expect to raise a total of K4 trillion (US\$3.96 billion) in tax this fiscal year. About K1.9 trillion has already been collected as of October, halfway through the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

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IN BRIEF

Plenty of downside with ongoing recovery, says Chinese official

The global economic recovery is beset by “downside risks”, China’s vice-premier told Asia-Pacific finance ministers on October 22, a day after growth in the world’s second-largest economy hit a five-year low.

The meeting in Beijing of ministers from the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum precedes the group’s annual summit next month, when Chinese President Xi Jinping is to host counterparts including US President Barack Obama, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

“Now global economic recovery remains difficult, with downside risks still existing,” China’s Vice-Premier Zhang Gaoli said in a speech formally starting the finance meeting. – AFP

Chinese brokers left hanging on plans to link HK, Shanghai

There is no timetable for a program to link Hong Kong’s and Shanghai’s stock exchanges, Hong Kong Exchanges & Clearing Ltd chief executive officer Charles Li said on October 17, helping trigger losses in Chinese stocks. Last month, he said the link may begin on a Monday in October, which would leave October 27 as the last start date.

When China’s Premier Li Keqiang unexpectedly announced the plan to connect the two exchanges in an April 10 speech, regulators said the link would begin in six months. The lack of a definitive commencement is raising questions over the readiness of regulators and brokers for the program, which will give overseas investors unprecedented access to mainland shares. – Bloomberg

Japanese data shows its economy is on the wrong track

Japan’s shaky economy was dealt another blow on October 22, as official data showed a widening September trade deficit that puts the world’s number-three economy on track to log a record annual shortfall.

The worse-than-expected deficit of 958.3 billion yen (US\$8.96 billion) adds to a string of weak figures and follows a sharp economic contraction in the second quarter after an April sales tax rise slammed the brakes on growth – fuelling fears of a recession.

The latest numbers translate into a trade deficit of 10.47 trillion yen for the first nine months of the year. – AFP

Big Blue goes for a dive

IBM Corporation plunged to a three-year low in New York trading on October 20 after abandoning an earnings forecast for 2015, as the company struggles to transform fast enough to handle the shift to cloud computing.

IBM said it will provide an update on its projections in January, ditching a five-year plan to boost profit. The shares tumbled 7.1 percent, dragging down the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Warren Buffett, IBM’s biggest shareholder, had US\$900 million of his investment wiped out.

While Chief Executive Officer Ginni Rometty had been banking on a strong second half of the year, IBM instead faced weaker-than-expected software sales and lower productivity in services in the third quarter.

– Bloomberg

Uzbek’s textile exports top US\$1 billion despite US criticism

Major cotton exporter Uzbekistan said on October 20 that it had exported US\$1 billion worth of textile products this year, adding that international sales are expected to grow.

The announcement was made shortly after the United States criticised the tightly-controlled Central Asian country for failing to stop using forced labour in its cotton fields.

“This year the total volume of exports of textile products has reached \$1 billion,” said Uzbek Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

“Export volumes are being ramped up every year,” he said. – AFP

PARIS

Shine rubs off Asian luxuries

PROTESTS in Hong Kong, an economic slowdown and anti-corruption drive in China and a coup in Thailand: Asia is no longer a market of constant growth for luxury goods firms.

LVMH, world number-one in the sector and owner of brands like Louis Vuitton, Givenchy and Dior, saw its sales drop by 3 percent in Asia, excluding Japan, in the third quarter of 2014, a far cry from the halcyon days of 2010-2012.

In every other market, LVMH’s sales increased, according to figures published last week. Even activity in sluggish Europe has done better over the past nine months, the group said.

The crisis in Hong Kong “will have an impact” on the quarterly results, group finance director Jean-Jacques Guiony said. “We have already noted some negative impact on activity in duty free shops in the third quarter.”

Arnaud Cadart, an analyst at CM-CIC securities, said a “rare coming-together of economic, monetary and geopolitical factors have had a negative impact on the Asian market”.

Slowing economic growth in China, along with a clampdown on lavish spending by government officials, is crippling luxury goods firms that are used to viewing the growing pool of wealthy and brand-conscious consumers in the world’s number-two



Unless masks are included, this Hong Kong protestor has probably put his purchasing of luxury goods on hold. Photo: AFP

economy as a cash cow.

Consultants Bain & Company have forecast that the luxury goods market in China will contract for the first time ever this year.

This will have a clear impact on companies like Switzerland’s Richemont, Britain’s Burberry and Mulberry, and Italy’s Prada, and many luxury brands are reining in their previously

rapid expansion.

Bain said the slowdown in China, combined with other factors, would put the brakes on the global luxury-goods sector, which the consultancy now sees growing at 2pc in 2014 – what it called “the new normal”.

While rich Chinese clients are still seen as the big spenders, these days the splurging tends to be on holiday

rather than at home.

Still, that’s not to say all luxury firms are putting the skids on the breakneck pace of expansion in China.

Hermes cut the ribbon on a glittering new store in Shanghai in September, and the shoe also still fits for Jimmy Choo, whose initial public offering (IPO) launched in London this week was aimed at raising cash to tap into demand in China and Japan.

Luxury goods firms have also complained that a drive to stamp out lavish and ostentatious spending has dried up sales of cognac and expensive wines as well as items such as watches, traditionally given as presents.

French spirit-maker Remy Cointreau this week said sales in the first half of the year had slumped 15.5pc, dragged lower by weaker demand for its flagship Remy Martin cognac in China.

Luxury goods sectors in other countries in the region have also taken a hit from Chinese tourists staying away for a variety of reasons, including a military-backed coup in Thailand. Singapore has seen luxury goods clients cut by a fifth, said Bain.

But the biggest dent in the sector is likely to come from the ongoing protests in Hong Kong, a global centre for luxury watches and the high-end goods market in general. – AFP

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Unleashing entrepreneurship's potential

HENRICH DAHM

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THE economy requires structural change and technological catch-up for growth to be inclusive in Myanmar. Economic policy and development partners need to promote entrepreneurship in order to unleash the potential of a growing private sector. What's more, the stranglehold of the current political elites must be eased and economic policy must benefit all.

In the past, economic policy has been used to reinforce the dominance of the predatory elite and weaken the entrepreneurial groups that could threaten the status quo if they became too affluent. While some people argue that working with the crony companies is the only way to quickly develop the economy, others insist that it does the opposite. But another option is often overlooked - unleashing the potential of entrepreneurship to build up a new class of businesspeople, which can have a multiplier effect on the economy.

There is substantial unrealised potential within Myanmar's private sector that just needs a more favourable environment and targeted support to flourish. Decades of restrained energy, talent and aspirations are just now being released. People around the country are eager to seize the moment to create a future for themselves and their families by starting a new business.

Current activities encouraging entrepreneurship and start-up activities are successfully focusing on organising events, doing trainings and basically investing in catalytic individuals. One of

the most compelling ways to help firms succeed is by increasing the power of the linkages and networks they are part of. Networks support indigenous and private systems of learning, so that entrepreneurs can be encouraged to learn from their peers. Many business ecosystems bypass weak regulatory environments by creating private capacity for regulation and enforcement within the network.

But there is a need to think systematically about what it takes to support a start-up ecosystem. To flourish, entrepreneurial activity requires a concentration of talent, infrastructure, capital, and networks - key success factors of a start-up ecosystem, as epitomised by Silicon Valley. Additional research on entrepreneurship is needed to better understand the interplay of entrepreneurial characteristics and the business environment in Myanmar.

A great opportunity for levelling the playing field is the fast rising usage of ICT in Myanmar. Mobile technology especially is generating new possibilities for entrepreneurs to change the local business landscape by opening up new markets and finding new innovative ways to compete within the established power structures.

The disruptive force of ICT entrepreneurship may be a chance to bring innovation to sectors that otherwise will be dominated by connected companies for years to come. But the government holds the key to ICT infrastructure development and will play a decisive role in shaping the direction of the industry and its potential for innovative disruption.

ICT is also holding great promise for deepening financial access in the country. ICT offers new ways to finance for local people and enterprises that previously had no access to flexible financing due to rigid banking regulations and the information monopolies of government and connected businesses. ICT offers innovative ways to open up the financial sector and put private capital to work where it is needed most.

There is a need to think systematically about what it takes to support a start-up ecosystem.

Putting aside the regulatory issues, new financial arrangements like business angels, crowd financing, start-up equity funds and venture capital can be mobilised to provide entrepreneurs with targeted financial solutions outside the banking sector. Waiting for the current banking system to provide effective services to SMEs will take years to come. Only a substantial shift in government policy can address the systemic failure affecting access to finance for SMEs.

An interesting phenomenon of Myanmar's entrepreneurship scene is the unusual strong presence of social enterprises. This is driven by a large number of young people with a busi-

ness education, a plethora of social issues and the government's increasing acceptance and support of independent social businesses. In an environment like Myanmar, social enterprises can achieve social impact more efficiently than the government, more sustainably and creatively than not-for-profits, and more generously than business. Its potential to contribute to inclusive growth is huge.

But for current social enterprises to grow into a sustainable economic force, substantial challenges have to be overcome. Most of the social enterprises are owner-driven, focusing on small niche or regional markets with limited growth potential. While they can make a big impact in a short amount of time by focusing on niche markets, in the long-term they will need to transform from niche to mass markets, develop repeatable business models, improve funding and develop into professional run businesses.

To support the rise of the social enterprise sector beyond its nascent stage more systematic and long-term support with increased cooperation between government, development partners, and enterprises will be necessary.

Development partners in Myanmar have a responsibility to ensure that a favourable business environment exist for all private sector actors. A "business-as-usual" approach will not be enough to generate the higher and more inclusive growth patterns needed to make substantial and sustainable inroads into reducing poverty. They therefore need to be aware of the key constraints for different private sector entities to

contribute to broader growth.

The momentum created by current reforms is unlikely to be sustained unless non-connected enterprises find the space to innovate and operate on a level playing field. While there are well-documented examples of crony companies, there are also companies who succeeded by identifying and exploiting legitimate opportunities, albeit within a climate of corruption. They are very effective at recognising opportunities, mobilising resources, managing risks, crafting compelling strategies, and building strong business models.

These companies show innovative ways of working in this country that are well worth being replicated and scaled up as best practices. They may well define a new age for entrepreneurship and innovation in Myanmar that could redefine the paradigm of the economy.

Entrepreneurship can help to unleash some of the country's great potential, but whether the economic development will be more broad-based will ultimately depend on the role SMEs will play in future.

Substantial work is needed to develop targeted support, regulations, investment and policy initiatives that are actively designed to level the playing field and help all businesses to equally grow and prosper.

.....
Henrich Dahm is an independent private sector development expert based in Yangon who specialises in SME development, entrepreneurship development, incubators and business development services. He has 25 years of experience in Southeast Asia, especially in Vietnam.

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Email: myanmar.office@unfpa.org

For further details, please see the vacancy announcement posted at UN billboard. No.6, Natmauk Road, Yangon and also at UNFPA website (<http://myanmar.unfpa.org>)

Applications will be considered only when meeting all requirements set in detailed vacancy announcement.



Pact, a U.S based INGO with operations throughout Myanmar, is currently seeking an experienced and dedicated candidate for the position below.

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Department: Shae Thot Program

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Detailed job description including requirements for the position is available at the Pact office or www.themimu.info/jobs/index.php

Interested and qualified candidates can send their application letter, CV, one passport-sized photo and references to:

HR Officer, Pact #608 Penthouse, Bo Son Pat Condominium, Pabedan Township

Tel: 09-8553198; 373221, 378931 & 245447 (Ext: 78, 73)

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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME Vacancy Announcement – UNDP HR/2014



As part of the UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Programme the Learning Centre for the Myanmar Hluttaw has been developed to strengthen and enhance the capacity of MPs and Staff resulting in improved performance of the Hluttaw and public trust in the Institution. UNDP is looking for competent and motivated candidates for the position as Learning Centre Manager to lead this work forward. For more information please visit:

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JOB OPPORTUNITY



The Project for Capacity Development of Legal, Judicial and Relevant Sectors in Myanmar, one of the technical cooperation projects of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), is seeking a qualified Myanmar national to fill the following position:

Title: Project Assistant
Location: Union Attorney General's Office and the Office of the Supreme Court of the Union, Nay Pyi Taw
Deadline: 7 November 2014
Starting Date: To be discussed
Initial Contract: 1 year (incl. 3 months' probation)
Qualifications:

- Good command of English and Myanmar (Knowledge of Japanese is an asset)
- University Degree (Law, Political Sciences, Public Administration or Economics would be desirable)
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Interested candidates are required to submit an application letters, CVs, educational certificates and relevant documents to info@jicalegalproject.com.

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Property

BUSINESS EDITOR: Jeremy Mullins | jeremymullins7@gmail.com



Tourists are driving up Inle-area prices. Photo: Staff

Inle area land prices ride tourism boom

KHIN SU WAI
jasminekhin@gmail.com

LAND prices in the formerly sleepy Nyaung Shwe-Inle Lake region of Shan State are beginning to rival prices in urban Yangon and Mandalay, according to local real estate agents.

Prices have doubled since 2010 as a rush of tourists is leading to more hotels and other tourism businesses setting up in the area.

Top-quality land now costs about K35,000 a square foot, with average quality lots selling for between K25,000 and K28,000 a square foot, according to local broker Ko Akyi Lay.

"In 2010 buyers thought deeply before spending K10 million or K20 million on a 1500-square-foot-plot - but now the price can be up to K100 million," he said.

One of his friends had sold a plot for K30 million and distributed money to his family, he said, but the plot had recently risen to K300 million, causing his friend depression.

Although prices have increased from 2010, they really began to take off in 2012 as more tourism business interest arrived in the area. Local brokers also claimed it is getting more difficult to receive permission to build a hotel near Inle Lake, so businesspeople have purchased land near Nyaung Shwe city.

The city has 8 wards with an

estimated 170,000 dwellers in the area, according to township data. An official also estimated the area sees about 80,000 tourists annually, though the number has been increasing significantly.

Some local residents have sold their downtown plots and bought into the city's eastern and southern outskirts - though even in the suburbs prices have been on the rise.

One broker said he bought the 80 by 90 foot plot for K1.5 million, but a buyer has already offered K200 million.

"There are not enough hotel rooms yet for the huge number of travellers. It's not only visitors coming to the lake, but also trekking that is becoming popular," he said. The broker added that sometimes visitors are unable to find lodging and forced to stay at local monasteries.

"You can say that all of Nyaung Shwe relies on the tourism sector."

Prices are high, but there is still buying interest, he added.

The high land prices are, however, getting in the way of some investment decisions.

Ko Phone, a member of a local coop, said it had planned to buy a market stall and rent it out, but prices have climbed far beyond what they were capable of affording.

Land prices are also rising in nearby Taunggyi.

MANDALAY

Low-income housing c

SITHU LWIN

sithulwin.mmtimes@gmail.com

MANDALAY City Development Committee will build 5000 low-cost housing units this year, targeted for those evicted by other projects, retired government staff and wounded veterans.

Large projects in Mandalay, such as housing developments in Chann Mya Tharsi and Pyigyitagun townships as well as the highway bus terminal in Amarapura township, have forced many residents from their homes.

While officials say they aim to provide the newly built flats at low prices first to a list of 1073 households evic-

'Our name was not included on the list [for low-cost housing] when it was announced at the local ... office.'

U Than Myint Oo
Disappointed Mandalay resident



Variety wasn't a priority when planning Mandalay's low-cost housing project. Photo: Staff

ed by development, some claim there are problems with the list.

A total of 1344 flats of the 5000 total in Mya Yi Nandar ward, Chann Mya Tharsi township have been completed and sold at low rates by October 20, according to MCDC secretary of Khin Maung Tint.

Priority has been given to the people on the list who were evicted by other projects, though once they are provided for, pensioners and family members of deceased veterans will be able to purchase the flats, according to plans from the Department of City of Planning and Land

SEOUL

Official apparently commits suicide

AN official dealing with safety measures at a concert in South Korea where 16 people died when the grate they were standing on collapsed apparently committed suicide hours after the tragedy, authorities said.

The death of the 37-year-old local government official, surnamed Oh, was announced as South Korean police launched an investigation into the October 17 incident at an outdoor pop concert in the city of Seongnam.

The victims were standing on a ventilation grating to get a better view when the structure collapsed under their weight, sending them plunging 18.7 metres (62 feet) down into an underground parking area.

Amateur video footage obtained by the YTN news channel showed shocked spectators surrounding the collapsed grate as the popular all-girl K-pop band 4Minute, ap-

parently oblivious to the accident, continued performing on stage.

Disaster relief spokesperson Kim Nam-Jun told journalists on October 17 that Mr Oh, who worked with a group sponsoring the concert, apparently committed suicide after jumping off a building near where the tragedy took place.

He was found dead early on October 18 a few hours after he was interrogated by police over the dis-

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— U Thein Aung, Myanmar Freedom Farmers League, on the halting of rice exports to China

Face to face with the wolves of Western China
WORLD 46

omes to needy



Sithu Lwin

Administration. However, the process has come under criticism from those who say they should be included on the list of eligible buyers but have not been. U Than Myint Oo bought land at a dispute site in Kan Gyee Gone township, the rights to which were

later removed. “When there was a tough land dispute, authorities collected the names in the households to secure a place in the low-cost housing,” he said. “But our name was not included on the list when it was announced at the local ward office.” U Than Myint Oo said he had made a formal complaint to an MCDC official, who said his family would be included on the list’s next iteration. In the meantime, though, he said he has having trouble meeting the demands for rent at his current flat as well as paying for the installment payment that will be due when his does get chosen for a low-cost house. The low-cost flats are comprised of a living room, bedroom, kitchen, toilet and bathroom, and will mostly be in 30 four-story buildings. Prices range from K6 million to K12 million (US\$5940 to \$11,880) and can be paid for in cash or through bank loans – though with a loan at least 30 percent of the value of the flat must be submitted as a down payment. Myanmar Oriental, Yadanarbon and Housing Development banks will provide the financing for buyers. MCDC is also keen to prevent a secondary market for the flats and prevent speculation, so buyers must commit to staying in the unit for five years before selling, and must receive MCDC approval when they eventually do so. – Translation by Thiri Min Htun

after concert collapse

aster, YTN TV said. Mr Kim also said authorities had inspected the site on October 18. “A joint team of police and national forensic experts scoured the site this morning and closely inspected gratings and related structures,” he said. Police have questioned 15 people, including officials of the local internet news provider which financed and organised the concert, Yonhap news agency said. “If it turns out that safety regulations were ignored, we would bring criminal charges against them,” a police official was quoted as saying by Yonhap. Witnesses told media there were no security guards or safety fences to prevent overflowing spectators climbing onto the grate af

ter some 400 prepared chairs were fully occupied well before the concert kicked off. More than 700 people were believed to be attending the outdoor concert. “Many people on the vent gratings were chanting and dancing to the music. I was worried about their safety but there were no security guards around,” a 45-year-old man who runs a restaurant near the site was quoted as saying by Chosun Ilbo newspaper. “The show host repeatedly told the spectators to come off the grate but no one paid heed to the warning,” another witness told the paper. A safety engineering expert, Professor Chung Jae-Hee, said the incident was another “man-made” disaster. – AFP

HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Bundles of balconies in Hlaing tsp



BALCONIES are a big deal, though they’re often too small. It can be difficult to tell sometimes whether a Yangon balcony deserves the name or is crossing into window-sill territory. At House of the Week’s current abode, the balcony is barely big enough to dry some laundry and hold a couple underused lawn chairs. However, House of the Week dreams big, and hopes one day to have the sort of expansive balcony boasted by this week’s house. The mind reels at the possibilities of such a large veranda – an outdoor brunch, an evening party, mooring a small blimp, the options are limitless. Located in Mya Kan Thar housing in Hlaing township, the house is also suitably located for those who want

a quiet place to live or work. It has four master bedrooms, one smaller bedroom and a double living room, along with others. It’s a large two-and-a-half-storey home, with 5500-square-feet of space in a 7500-square-foot compound. There’s plenty of large, pleasant windows in the home, allowing in lots of light and the shade from nearby trees. It’s a Western-style home with the full range of amenities you’d expect from an expensive home. The listing price is \$7000, but it is likely worth your while putting your negotiating skills to work for the home. It’s also near top-quality education centre International School of Myanmar, making it quite a con-

venient place to have a family. And once you’ve sent the little tykes off to class, you can enjoy some peace and quiet on the balcony.

– Tin Yadanar Htun

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VITABIOTICS WHERE NATURE MEETS SCIENCE

Girls are geeks too

Myanmar's women in tech face challenges with access and resources, but one new group is setting out to hack the system



CATHERINE
TRAUTWEIN

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OOREDOO'S entrepreneurial branch Ideabox has kicked off an initiative in Myanmar to create space for women in the country's tech scene.

The Geek Girls program, built off a legacy of other women-centric community organisations such as the San Francisco-based nonprofit Girls in Tech, met for the first time at the end of September at Gusto Cafe.

The group aims to steer women toward careers in technology and address challenges they face in the pursuit.

Ma Sandi Sein Thein, a Geek Girls organiser, said it will help foster connections between women and entrepreneurs that could provide members with job opportunities in the field.

Working with Ideabox, Ma Sandi Sein Thein recognised the need for Geek Girls when she saw the scarcity of women entrepreneurs and leaders in tech and, specifically, realised how few female coders had signed up for a September hackathon in Yangon. A Facebook page for Geek Girls of Myanmar was established in the first week of that month and racked up 50 members in seven days.

Ma Sandi Sein Thein said she called for a preliminary meeting and 30 people showed up. "They sent feedback to me like what they want in the future," she said. "Now we have action plans for the whole year, like regular meet-ups, quarterly training workshop programs and [an] annual event like an app competition."

In future, the program will provide technical and business trainings, bootcamps, workshops, meet-ups and more, according to a press release. And eventually, Ma Sandi Sein Thein sees Geek Girls becoming self-governing.

Its drive to foster community comes from a definite lack of space for women in the technology field, something male counterparts have less trouble with.



Team Ace won Code For Change Myanmar's Business Solutions Hackathon in September. Photo: Supplied

Ma Sandi Sein Thein said that though 60 percent of Myanmar Computer University's students are female, their number dwindles in the field after school – something she thinks Geek Girls can change.

"They shouldn't just end up doing nothing after graduation," she said. "We built Geek Girls because we will let [women] meet female role models in technology. I think their motivation will be consistent if they have this kind of platform, these kinds of continuous activities."

Julian Gorman, the director of digital services for Ooredoo Myanmar and a co-founder of Ideabox, also emphasised the importance of establishing an ecosystem around these women.

"There has to be training and a whole bunch of other things," he said during a panel discussion at Ooredoo's Connected Women's Conference on October 17. He said the

majority of the Ideabox community is self-taught. "You'll find guys will sit around some geeky technology and share ideas and things like that."

"But women, I think, don't necessarily have that capability," he continued. "That's why we have the Geek Girls program – it's like, get together at a cafe and start to talk geeky stuff and ... participate in a community."

Mr Gorman also pointed to the role resources can play in widening the gender gap between men and women in tech. In visiting two technical colleges in Yangon – one public, one private – he heard how similarly educated women and men faced different opportunities.

Most of the public school's faculty and students were women, he said, while at the private school, a majority of the staff were women but all the students were men. Describing the public school, Mr Gorman said, "I think there was one small com-

puter lab full of secondhand computers from some donor."

A staff member at the private technical college informed him the industry would pick their students over ones from public schools, even though they all had been taught by similarly trained faculty.

"It struck me that male students had access ... to the resources and then the industry would prefer them," he said.

Besides the uneven spread of resources, Myanmar's social norms may also prove discouraging to women who are considering a career in tech.

"The reason why we have less women in technology in my own perception may be because of our culture," said one woman at the Connected Women's Conference. While addressing a panel of women in the industry, she noted that she had a 9pm curfew – an obstacle to coding all night at a hackathon, for instance.

Ma Sandi Sein Thein says that these rules may play critical role in keeping women out of tech, because the industry can sometimes operate nocturnally. She said that while programmers often remain awake all night coding, strict parents might forbid women from staying late to work on projects with men.

"That's a problem for Myanmar girls," she said. "That is why they are not motivated, they get left behind."

Meanwhile, another panellist allotted space for men in the cultural conversation.

"One of my takeaways is that you need to engage men because men are your fathers, and your brothers, your husbands, colleagues; and I'm assuming some of these social norms are driven by dad," said Sui Ling Cheah, vice chair at Singapore's Avista Advisory Group.

"In a small way ... charm your father. Tell him this is for his own good and your own good."

"I say that facetiously but I don't mean any disrespect to the culture," she said. "I do realise that there are a lot of significant challenges."

Tweaking a situation can make a big difference for women entering a space where they will be greatly outnumbered. In the case of Code for Change Myanmar's September Business Solutions Hackathon, accommodation was provided to give hackers of both genders comfortable places to crash during the 48-hour event.

"Everyone was ... there to help us with everything we need so that we didn't feel any burden about working with a bunch of guys even at nighttime," said Yangon's Honey Mya Win, whose group, Team Ace, won the competition.

"They arranged food, transportation and even separate rest rooms for girls to take a nap, and it was really convenient for us."

Incremental steps such as these could help close Myanmar's gender gap in tech.

"What's exciting here is that you are starting with a clean slate," Sui Ling Cheah said. "You can do anything. And it sounds like you will do anything."

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EU gives climate change goals the green light

European leaders reconcile to targets for 2030 including 40 percent greenhouse gas emissions cuts, 27pc renewable energy supply and efficiency gains

EUROPEAN Union leaders agreed October 24 what they hailed as the world's most ambitious climate change targets for 2030, paving the way for a new UN-backed global treaty next year.

The 28 leaders overcame deep divisions at a summit in Brussels to reach a deal including a commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40 percent compared to 1990 levels.

They also agreed on 27 percent targets for renewable energy supply and efficiency gains, in spite of reservations from some member states about the cost of the measures.

"Deal! At least 40 percent emissions cut by 2030. World's most ambitious, cost-effective, fair EU 2030 climate energy policy agreed," EU president Herman Van Rompuy tweeted.

The EU wanted to agree on the targets ahead of a summit in Paris in November and December 2015, where it is hoped the world will agree to a new phase of the Kyoto climate accords which run until 2020.

The agreement puts the EU "in the driving seat" ahead of the Paris conference, European Commission head Jose Manuel Barroso said.

Environmental groups complained that the deal did not go far enough to cut global warming.

The European leaders haggled late into the night amid a split between richer, greener nations and poorer countries that depend heavily on fossil fuels or on gas from Russia.

Poland had previously threatened to veto a deal on

emissions reductions, fearing that its near complete reliance on coal would have made it prohibitively expensive to meet the targets.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande had talks with Polish premier Eva Kowalczyk on the sidelines of the summit in a bid to talk her round.

Ms Merkel, whose country is a leader in renewables, said the deal would "give Europe a voice and a negotiation position in the international climate talks."

The accord also promotes new interconnection links between member states allowing them to export up to 15 percent of their power output when they are in surplus and import up to 15 percent when they are in deficit.

Mr Van Rompuy said these interconnection links were a key part of developing the EU's energy market and would provide insurance against supply disruption.

Mr Van Rompuy cited both the Ukraine crisis and turmoil

in the Middle East as good reason for the EU to act now to bolster its energy security.

The climate deal builds on the EU's targets for 2020 of a 20pc cut in greenhouse gases, blamed for global warming, a 20pc boost in renewables such as solar and wind power, and also a 20pc increase in energy efficiency.

While the new 40pc target for greenhouse gases and 27pc for renewables agreed were as expected, a 30pc goal for an increase in energy efficiency set in July by the Commission was watered down to 27pc.

Environment group Greenpeace said that the EU had "pulled the handbrake on clean energy".

"These targets are too low, slowing down efforts to boost renewable energy and keeping Europe hooked on polluting and expensive fuel," it said.

British-based humanitarian group Oxfam called for targets of 55pc in emissions cuts, 40pc for energy savings and 45pc for renewables.

— AFP



Herman Van Rompuy

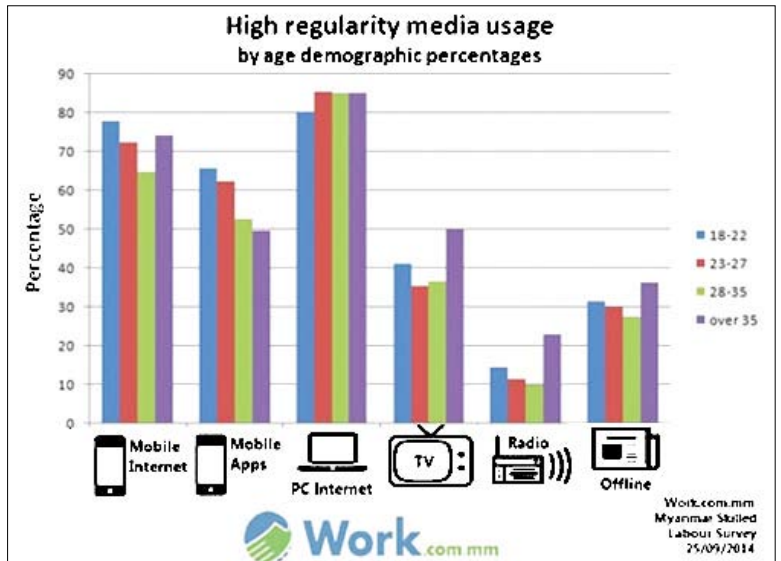
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RETWEETS

470

FAVORITES

108



PC lives on in Myanmar

CATHERINE TRAUTWEIN
newroom@mmtimes.com

AN overwhelming majority of skilled workers in Myanmar aged 18 and older still use PCs to access the internet, a recent survey from the online jobs platform work.com.mm finds.

While 47 percent of the more than 1000 individuals surveyed said they used PC internet "all the time", only 21pc said they used mobile internet that often, according to a company statement.

Myanmar has recently embarked on a connectivity overhaul with rollouts from Ooredoo and Telenor marking the near-privatisation of the telecoms market. Some have pinned the country as primed for "leapfrogging", or streaming past older tech straight onto mobile.

But for some in the skilled worker force, that jump has yet to land, with PC internet usage across all age groups remaining steep and beating out figures for mobile internet usage.

Meanwhile, the survey showed that mature adults have been hopping on the mobile internet more often than many of their younger counterparts. Around three-quarters of skilled workers over 35 use mobile internet with "high regularity" - "often" or "all the time". Only skilled workers between the ages of 18 and 22 edged out those more than 35 years old with regards to mobile usage.

However, the older demographic's comfort with mobile technology seems to decrease when confronted with newer elements.

The survey suggests app usage steadily declines with age, so that only about 50pc of people more than 35 years old engage with them more than "sometimes", "rarely" or "never".

So while more mature users seem capable of adopting new tech tricks, old habits die hard, and old media in Myanmar has yet to be completely leapfrogged.

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World

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WASHINGTON

IS named 'world's wealthiest terrorist' group as Canada reels from attack

THE Islamic State has become the world's wealthiest terror group, earning tens of millions of dollars a month from illegal oil sales and ransoms, US officials said on October 23.

"We have no silver bullet, no secret weapon to empty ISIL's coffers overnight. This will be a sustained fight, and we are in the early stages," said undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence David Cohen.

Mr Cohen is among a team of US administration officials leading the fight against the Islamic State (IS) group, also known as ISIL, which has seized a large swath of territory in Iraq and Syria.

The group is now "considered the world's wealthiest and most financially sophisticated terrorist organisation," said Marwan Muasher, vice president at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

His comments came as Canada was left reeling after a gunman shot dead a soldier and stormed parliament in Ottawa, just two days after another suspected Islamist militant ran over two military personnel with his car in Quebec, killing one.

The parliament gunman, Michael Zehaf Bibeau, 32, is suspected of planning to travel to Syria to fight alongside Islamic militants. He breached security at parliament after shooting dead a soldier, but was shot dead at the scene.

"ISIL has grabbed the world's attention for its outlandish ambitions and astounding brutality, but also for another reason: its substantial wealth," Mr Cohen told the think-tank.

The group's "primary funding tactics enable it today to

generate tens of millions of dollars per month," Mr Cohen said.

"Those tactics include the sale of stolen oil, the ransoming of kidnap victims, theft and extortion from the people it currently dominates, and, to a lesser extent, donations from supporters outside of Syria and Iraq."

Oil sales alone from captured refineries are allowing the militants to produce some 50,000 barrels a day from fields in Syria and Iraq, representing a daily income of about US\$1 million.

Mr Cohen said IS was selling the oil "at substantially discounted prices to a variety of middlemen, including some from Turkey, who then transported the oil to be resold".

Oil has also been sold to Kurds in Iraq, and then resold to Turkey, as it has "tapped into a long-standing and deeply rooted black market connecting traders in and around the area".

"In a further indication of the Assad regime's depravity, it seems that the Syrian government has made an arrangement to purchase oil from ISIL," Mr Cohen said, referring to

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

It has also generated about \$20 million through kidnappings, particularly of journalists and European hostages.

And it demands money from local businesses in cities and towns which it has captured through "a sophisticated extortion racket".

US airstrikes were having an effect on hindering the militants' ability to produce oil, and US sanctions would target those found buying illegal oil, Mr Cohen said.

"We are focused on restricting ISIL's access to the international financial system in order to impair its ability to collect funds from abroad, and to move, store, and use the funds it acquires locally."

The top official also said that the October 22 attack at the Canadian parliament, in which army reservist Corporal Nathan Cirillo was killed, was "a tragic reminder of the need to remain vigilant in the face of terror".

Canada would "have every support it needs from US intelligence," Mr Cohen vowed.

However Canadian officials said on October 23 they had found no evidence of a wider plot despite the other deadly attack on October 20 - also by a young Canadian convert to Islam.

It remained unclear whether Mr Zehaf-Bibeau "received any support in the planning of his attack" [on the parliament], said Royal Canadian Mounted Police Commissioner Bob Paulson, said on October 23. In the House of Commons that day members applauded Sergeant-at-Arms Kevin Vickers, who fired the shot that stopped Mr Zehaf-Bibeau.

- AFP

'It seems the Syrian government has made an arrangement to purchase oil from ISIL.'

David Cohen

US undersecretary for terrorism



Images show from top left to bottom right:- militants of Islamic State (IS) seen just before and after an explosion from an air strike on Tilsehir hill near the Turkish-Syrian border on October 23. The pictures were taken from Yumurtalik village, in Sanliurfa province. Photo: AFP



GENEVA

Ebola toll nears

As New York reports its first Ebola case, the World Health

TOP Ebola experts raised grave concerns last week about the worsening epidemic in west Africa as the number of infections soared to almost 10,000 and the death toll edged closer to 5000 and a doctor in New York was diagnosed with the virus, prompting further fears in the West.

The World Health Organization said on October 23 after an emergency meeting on the deadly haemorrhagic fever that the situation in the worst-hit countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone "remains of great concern" as cases increase exponentially.

A total of 976 cases have come in the last seven days alone, said Isabelle Nuttall, head of the UN agency's alert division.

WHO said the outbreak remains "a public health emergency of international concern".

A doctor who recently returned to New York from treating Ebola patients in Guinea tested positive on October 23 for the deadly virus, the first confirmed case in the city, officials said.

The 33-year-old, identified by US media as Craig Spencer, was placed in isolation, in the fourth case of Ebola diagnosed in the United States and the first outside Texas.

The patient arrived back in America's largest city at JFK airport on October 17, travelling via Europe, after working with Ebola patients in West Africa for the charity Doctors Without Borders.

Officials said he monitored his temperature twice a day and attempted to self-isolate, only displaying symptoms on October 23, a day after taking two subway trains to Brooklyn to go bowling.

New York City health department detectives have been tracing his movements and officials stressed there was no cause for alarm in the dense city of 8.4 million residents.

WHO formally declared a global emergency in August, sparking outside criticism and internal soul-searching over claims that it was too slow, as the first case was in Guinea in December.

WHO's deputy chief, Keiji Fukuda, said the international community had for months been ramping up the fight, with 600 international experts deployed in the embattled region over recent weeks.

Its "70/70" plan aims by December to ensure 70 percent of people infected by Ebola are placed in medical isolation, and, given that dead bodies can spread the virus, to ensure 70 percent of burials are conducted safely.

"By the beginning of December, we hope to see a bend in the curve. It's clear that it remains quite a challenge right now," Mr Fukuda said.

He pointed to major efforts to "break the chain of transmission" by setting up special Ebola wards to try to save the lives of those struck by the virus and stem fresh infections.



Pakistan’s polio martyrs – murdered for giving vaccines

WORLD 42

Street View gives rare glimpse into secluded Bhutan

WORLD 44



Dances with wolves in China’s Wild West

WORLD 46



IN PICTURES

PHOTO: AFP

Indian widows wave sparklers as they celebrate the Hindu festival Diwali on the banks of the Yamuna river in the northern city of Vrindavan on October 21. The women, who chanted as they walked through the streets, have left or been abandoned by their families after becoming widows. Until recently, they were kept hidden from society. But attitudes are changing, and local residents cheered the women on as they passed through the temple-filled town, many wearing brand saris gifted by a local organisation.

5000 as spread continues

Organization raised serious concerns about the virus’s exponential increase in Africa

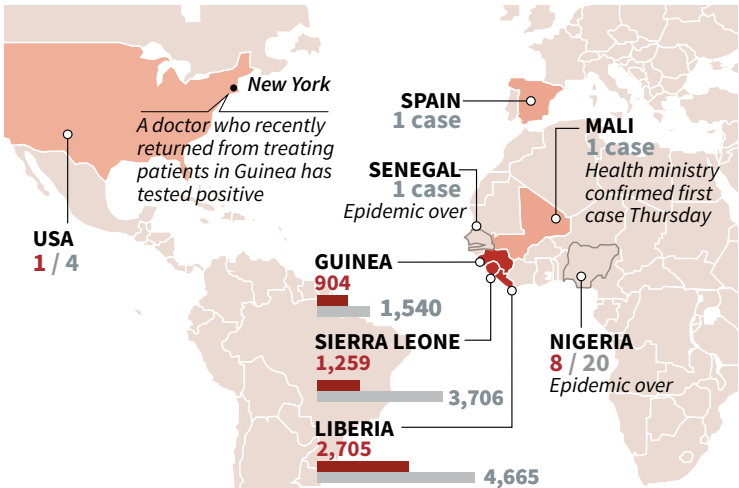
“But it has been terrifically difficult to get enough health workers, both domestic health workers as well as international health workers, and this continues to be one of the major challenges,” he said. Health workers have paid a heavy price, with 244 deaths out of 443 cases across the affected countries. The hunt is on for a vaccine, with supplies of Canadian-discovered experimental vaccine rVSV arriving in Geneva for a new round of trials. Hopes are also centred on ChAd3,

an experimental vaccine made by British company GlaxoSmithKline. Whichever proves its mettle in trials, WHO hopes to deploy tens of thousands of doses to Africa by early 2015 for “real-world” tests. WHO held closed-door talks on October 23 on the issue of access to and financing vaccines, as officials said costs could be in the “hundreds of millions” of dollars. At a meeting the same day, the European Union fast-tracked 24.4 million euros (US\$31 million) to find

vaccines and treatments. “We’re in a race against time on Ebola and we must address both the emergency situation and at the same time have a long-term response,” said EU chief Jose Manuel Barroso. Stemming Ebola in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone remains the top priority, the WHO said. Besides battling Ebola within their borders with “leadership, community engagement, bringing in more partners, paying staff on time, and accountability”, exit screening of air, land and sea travellers remains critical, it said. The agency reiterated its opposition to any general ban on travel or trade with the region, saying it would pile on more economic hardship and raise the risk of “uncontrolled migration of people from affected countries, raising the risk of international spread of Ebola.” Senegal and Nigeria, which together had a handful of cases, were declared Ebola-free by the WHO on October 17 and 20 respectively, and have won praise for their rapid fight-back against the disease. Despite concerns that the virus could raise its head in other west African nations, Mr Fukuda said Ebola’s stark impact actually helped track it. “You simply would not be able to cover up having lots of people die for mysterious reasons. There is reasonable confidence right now that we are not seeing widespread transmission Ebola into the neighbouring countries,” he said. – AFP

Ebola toll

World total 4,877 dead 9,936 cases
October 22*



AFP Source: WHO/reports

*Does not include latest US and Mali cases

HONG KONG

Former leader condemns protests as talks falter

HONG Kong’s former leader urged democracy demonstrators to leave the streets calling their protest a “gross violation”, as he warned the consequences of continuing the rallies beyond a month were “very serious”. Tung Chee-hwa, Hong Kong’s first chief executive after the 1997 handover who was himself ousted after huge protests, said the movement needed to be brought peacefully to an end. “We need to end this occupation because not only ... is it hurting livelihood of people but it’s a gross violation of the law,” Mr Tung told reporters on October 24 during his first public comments since the protests began nearly four weeks before. “One month is a long time already and the consequences of prolonging this occupation is very, very serious,” he said of the movement’s impact on the city’s economy. Parts of the city have been paralysed by a month of mass rallies and road blocks calling on Beijing to rescind its insistence that Hong Kong’s next leader be vetted by a loyalist committee ahead of the 2017 elections. Mr Tung also lent his support to the city’s embattled leader Leung Chun-ying. “During this time where there are many risks, I feel he has performed very well and has also gained the trust of the Chinese government.” Mr Tung had his own share of troubles in handling pro-democracy protests when 500,000 people took part in a rally against a proposed national security bill in 2003, forcing his

administration to shelve it. It was a key factor in his resignation 18 months later. Hong Kong student leaders said on October 22 they may not take part in further talks with the government after accusing city authorities of failing to make any meaningful offers during the first round of talks on October 21. During the discussions officials said there was still room to make the candidate vetting committee more democratic, without giving further details. They also said they would brief Beijing on recent events and suggested both sides could set up a committee to discuss further political reform beyond 2017. The movement’s leaders said on October 22 they were planning to conduct a poll of demonstrators at the city’s main protest camp to decide what their response should be to the government’s offers. The poll was due to take place on the evening of October 26 at the main site opposite the city’s government headquarters. Mr Tung called for both sides to continue talks as soon as possible. “The best solution is to have the students and the government to continue to have dialogue, and not to have any pre-conditions, then the chance of success for the dialogue would be very big,” he said. “The students must understand that to go against the Basic Law [Hong Kong’s mini-constitution] and to go against the decision of the National People’s Congress, it cannot be done.” – AFP



A poster is displayed in the Admiralty district of Hong Kong on October 23. Campaigners are now seeking to save the vast array of protest artwork that has sprung up around the protest site. Photo: AFP

Rule of law adopts 'Chinese characteristics'

China under Mr Xi is also in the midst of a campaign against dissent that rights groups have called the harshest such crackdown in decades. *AFP*

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BADABER

Pakistan’s polio martyrs dying for health

Medical workers are risking their lives to vaccinate children despite a Taliban campaign that has seen staff murdered for carrying out their duties

NADIA Khan treasures two photos of her sister Sumbal: one showing her bright-eyed and smiling, the other blank-faced in death after she was gunned down by militants, a “martyr” in Pakistan’s desperate fight against polio.

It was May 2013 and Sumbal and her friend Shirafat were vaccinating children against the crippling disease at a rough mudbrick house in the village of Badaber in the country’s militant-plagued northwest.

Suddenly a motorbike pulled up and the man on the back opened fire, killing Shirafat on the spot and putting 18-year-old Sumbal into a coma.

For 10 days Nadia kept a bedside vigil, to no avail.

“I remember her last moment when she lost her breath in hospital, lying silently,” said Nadia ahead of UN World Polio Day on October 24.

“She could not talk. We wished that at least she could have had her last words with us before passing away.”

Pakistan is one of only three countries, along with Afghanistan and Nigeria, where polio is still endemic, and efforts to stamp it out have been badly affected by attacks on vaccinators like Sumbal.

In the 2000s Pakistan looked on course to wipe out polio after a series of vaccination drives brought the number of cases down to just 28

in 2005, from more than 18,000 in 1993, according to UNICEF data.

But from 2008 the epidemic rebounded and in 2014 hit a 15-year high, with 210 cases – 80 percent of all the polio cases in the world.

The problem is concentrated in the northwest, wracked since 2007 by a homegrown Taliban insurgency, and the main city Peshawar has gained an unenviable reputation as the “world capital” of polio.

A Taliban ban on vaccination in North and South Waziristan tribal areas, on the Afghan border, has left hundreds of thousands of children unprotected from the virus.

Adding to the problem, many of the poorly educated population believe unfounded rumours about the vaccine containing pork or being a Western plot to sterilise Muslims.

Suspicious grew after the CIA used a Pakistani doctor in 2011 to stage a hepatitis vaccination program as cover to try to find Al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden.

Since December 2012, at least 30 polio vaccinators have been killed in Pakistan, along with nearly 30 police and security personnel guarding them.

Like Sumbal, Nadia too takes part in polio vaccination drives, but after her sister’s murder their parents begged her to quit.

“I told them that I will continue my sister’s mission and will keep on working until I complete her mission,” said Nadia from behind her veil.

The other victim of the attack, Shirafat Bibi, was gunned down just a few weeks before she was to be married.

She had carefully saved the US\$6 a day she earned for giving out polio drops to pay her dowry.

That May morning, after getting a call asking her to vaccinate some children near her home, the 28-year-



A Pakistani health worker administers the polio vaccine to a child during a vaccination campaign in Lahore on October 21. Photo: AFP

old embraced her mother Gul Khubana, who pleaded with her to stay at home.

“I told her that day not to go, even her father told her, but she said, ‘It will be my last visit and then I will quit this job and will not work’”, Khubana said.

After her death, the family was paid compensation and Shirafat’s brother Bilal was taken on by the local authorities to do the same job.

Now it is Bilal who swallows his fear and tours poor villages on what the health teams in the area call the “jihad against polio”.

The health workers and police guards killed in the fight against

polio are hailed as “martyrs” in Pakistan.

A year ago, little Shakirullah used to run happily around his neighbourhood in Peshawar, but then at the start of the year the diagnosis came like a hammer blow: polio.

The disease has left his legs flaccid and useless, and now, aged just two and a half, he can no longer stay upright without support.

“Other children can play but our poor little boy can only crawl about like a toddler,” laments his uncle Rafiullah, who fears what the future holds for his nephew.

Life in Pakistan is tough for people with disabilities, and beggars

with limbs ravaged by polio limping from car to car at traffic lights are a common sight.

Already this year, 350,000 young Pakistanis in the northwest have missed out on vaccination because of the perilous security situation, according to local authorities.

Even in the cities, resistance remains. Last week in Peshawar 10 percent of children visited by vaccination teams refused the drops, set dead against this supposedly “un-Islamic” vaccine.

The UN says Pakistan has made “notable progress” in the fight to halt polio transmission, but the struggle remains a daunting one. – AFP

‘I will continue my sister’s mission and will keep on working until I complete it.’

Nadia Khan

Sister of murdered health worker

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BANGKOK

Reforms launched

A COUNCIL selected by Thailand’s ruling junta, last week started work on reforms to close the nation’s festering political divide, a task critics dismiss the process as aimed at diluting the influence of ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha, who led a military coup in May, has said reforms to rid the kingdom of corruption are necessary before new elections can take place.

The first meeting of the 250-strong National Reform Council (NRC), tasked with recommending initiatives including a new constitution, took place on October 21.

NRC member Paboon Nititawan, a former senator and representative of a group that staged months-long protests preceding the coup, said the new body would help restore power to voters.

“We have to decrease the power of parties and increase the power of people. People should have the power to monitor MPs,” he said.

But critics say the new council is stacked with anti-Thaksin figures and designed to rid the kingdom of his influence.

The new constitution is expected to include clauses preventing those convicted of corruption from entering politics, a move which appears to target Mr Thaksin who fled Thailand in 2008 to avoid jail for a graft conviction.



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Dated: 27 October 2014

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The Myanmar Times



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THIMPHU

Street View offers rare glimpse into Bhutan

A SNEAK peek into Bhutan was delivered by Google last week when the company unveiled a Street View project for the remote Himalayan kingdom, featuring panoramic views of its majestic mountains, monasteries and crystal-clear rivers.

The "Land of the Thunder Dragon" has long been one of the most isolated countries on earth, only lifting its ban on television in 1999. Most foreign tourists have to pay a minimum US\$200 a day to visit.

But in a sign of its more recent embrace of modern technology, the government allowed Google to undertake a Street View project that could showcase some of its natural treasures for internet users.

"Most governments love Street View because it promotes tourism. They are drawn to its commercial benefits," Google's Divon Lan, one of the Street View managers, said on October 23 as the project was launched.

"In Bhutan, the conversation was very different, essentially along the lines of 'how can we bring Bhutan to the world without having floods of tourists turn up and erode our culture?'"

The year-long project kicked off in March 2013 with a Street View car travelling across the country's 3000-kilometre road network.

The car, mounted with a custom-built camera containing 15 lenses that recorded more than a million photos, drew some curious responses during its journey, Mr Lan said in an interview in the capital Thimphu.

"Villagers would see this strange-looking car and ask the driver about it. When he told them it was being used to take photos, they would get very excited and try to peer inside," added Mr Lan, who was involved in the digital mapping of Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple complex.

The resulting stream of rapid-fire 75-megapixel images offers audiences a view of a land seen by very few, with the country welcoming its first tourists just 40 years ago.

Since then, its stunning scenery and its reputation as a Buddhist "Shangri-La" has attracted tourists, but numbers are tightly controlled.

As well as being able to catch a glimpse of Thimphu, virtual visitors will now be able to see attractions such as a 17th century monastery known as



Google's Street View manager Divon Lan gestures during an interview in Thimphu, Bhutan, on October 23. Photo: AFP

the "Palace of Happiness" in the former capital of Punakha.

Other sites include the national museum which is housed in a 17th century watchtower in the town of Paro and the Trongsa Dzong, the country's largest fortress which overlooks a rocky river gorge in central Bhutan.

Despite its past reputation as a hold-out against the 20th century's advances, Bhutan has become something of a champion of the Internet and mobile-technology era.

It has a largely rural population of just 750,000, but Bhutan's two cellular networks have 550,000 subscribers. And the last official figures in 2012 showed more than 120,000 Bhutanese had some kind of mobile internet connectivity.

'The conversation was ... how can we bring Bhutan to the world without having floods of tourists erode our culture.'

Divon Lan
Street View manager

Tourists however say the remoteness of a country which is wedged between China and India remains its main attraction.

Its approach to tourism reflects "an incredibly delicate balance" between seclusion and openness, said Melissa Biggs Bradley, CEO and founder of the luxury travel website Indagare.com.

"One of the great appeals to the tourist is how closed it is, how rare it is to see another tourist and therefore how easy it is to have meaningful exchanges with locals," said Ms Bradley, who visited Bhutan for the first time last month.

Her views were echoed by Mary Jane South, a 52-year-old Canadian on her first visit to the country.

Ms South said Bhutan offered "more of a road-less-traveled experience" compared to neighbours like Nepal, which saw 800,000 visitors last year, nearly eight times the number recorded by Thimphu.

Damcho Rinzin, spokesperson for the national Tourism Council of Bhutan, said that while visitors were welcome, the country did not want to become just another travellers' destination.

The push to preserve traditional culture is reflected in the traditional clothing worn by men and women, mandatory at public functions and offices.

"Google Street View is a way of preserving our culture at a time of great change. It reminds us of what we have in Bhutan," Mr Rinzin said. — AFP



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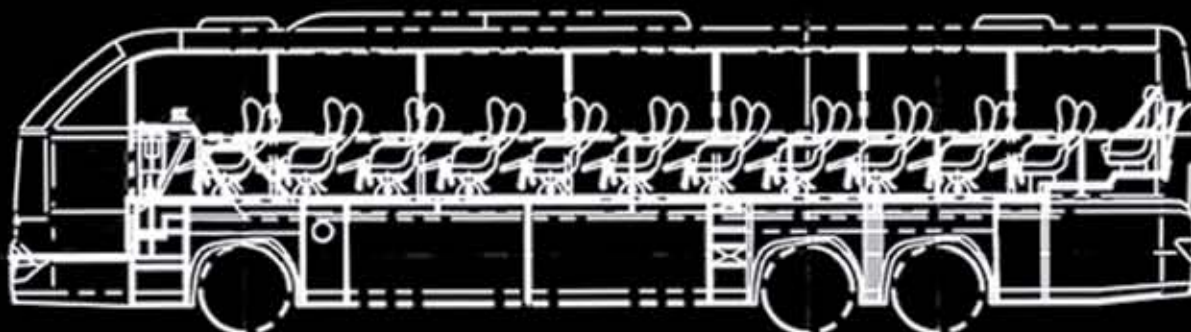


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JIMSAR

Dances with Chinese wolves

FACING down a pack of snarling wolves, the symbol of the Uighur minority in China's violence-wracked far west, businessman Yang Changsheng offered a sausage in friendship.

"I have a deep feeling for wolves. They will attack other people, but not me," said Mr Yang, who breeds the animals high in the snow-capped Tianshan mountains, in the vast border region of Xinjiang.

The area usually hits the headlines for violent clashes involving Uighurs which have killed hundreds in the past year, and which the government blames on organised separatist groups.

But Mr Yang's breeding park seems a world away from the troubles, in a remote valley where shepherds on horseback trot alongside burbling mountain streams.

"It started as a hobby but now the more wolves I breed the more I want to breed," said Mr Yang, 63.

His parents, from poverty-stricken Henan more than 1600 kilometres (1000 miles) to the east, migrated to Xinjiang in the 1950s, among the millions of China's ethnic Han majority who were resettled in minority border regions.

The process transformed the demographics of Xinjiang, where Uighurs, a mostly Muslim group with cultural ties to neighbouring central Asia, made up more than 80 percent of its people in the 1940s and now account for less than half.

The population has quadrupled in the last six decades, threatening the grey wolves which roamed its grasslands for millennia.

Unlike the Han, Uighurs traditionally revere the animals, whose skin and bones are still considered to bring good luck.

"For thousands of years, Turkic people have respected the wolf and taken it as a symbol," said Ahmatbarat, a taxi driver in Xinjiang's ethnically mixed capital Urumqi.

"It is the totemic animal of the Uighurs."

That has made the wolf a



Yang Changsheng feeds his wolves at a park in a remote valley in China's Xinjiang region on September 18. Photo: AFP

sensitive symbol in the region, where some Uighurs dream of having their own country and Beijing blames foreign-influenced Islamist separatists for spiralling violence.

But rights groups say that the turmoil is fuelled by heavy-handed local police, government restrictions on Islam and Uighur culture, and economic exploitation.

Chinese authorities are in the midst of a "strike hard" anti-terror campaign that has seen more than 20 executions announced in recent months, hundreds of arrests, and prominent Uighur scholar Ilham Tohti sentenced to life in prison.

In his trial on separatism charges last month, prosecutors cited remarks Mr Tohti, who is seen as a moderate government critic, made about wolves during a university lecture.

"He said that Chinese people are

called children of the dragon, but the Uighurs' totem is the wolf. So if we are children of wolves, then we are not Chinese," according to video footage shown in court, his lawyer Li Fangping said.

Mr Tohti's sentence sparked an outcry from human rights groups.

Mr Yang owns more than 100 wolves, but his plans have stoked controversy.

The businessman made a considerable fortune in logistics before turning his attention to wolves, collecting specimens from neighbouring Mongolia and Russia.

He plans to breed more than 1000 wolves and release them into the wild to become the star attraction of a tourist park.

"I want to tell the government: Give me this land, and I will release wolves on it, and people will see what it is like

for wolves to run free," said Mr Yang.

The project is loss-making, said the 63-year-old, who bears a faint scar on one cheek from a close encounter of the lupine kind, but he added his motives were conservationist.

But Yuan Guoying, head of the Xinjiang Ecological Study Society, was sceptical, accusing him of exploiting the animals.

"Wolf bodies and wolf teeth are expensive, their claws and feet are sold as gifts," he said, "The project must be about making money, or why would he invest so much?"

Wolf numbers have bounced back since the late 1980s when China, which tightly controls gun ownership, placed tight limits on hunting in nature reserves. But the animals have been blamed by state media for an average of 5000 cattle deaths a year. — AFP

SYDNEY

Sex 'invented' in Scotland

IT may not have been love as we know it, but around 385 million years ago, our very distant ancestors, armoured fish called placoderms, developed the art of intercourse in the cool waters of a Scottish loch.

That is the findings of a team of evolutionary scientists, who point to the fossil of a placoderm species blessed with the name of *Microbrachius dicki*.

Measuring about 8 centimetres (4 inches) in length, *M. dicki* lived in habitats in modern-day Scotland, where the first specimen was found in 1888.

Placoderms have previously been found to be the most primitive jawed animal, the earliest known vertebrate forerunner of humans.

But they now have an even more honoured place in the book of life.

Microbrachius is the first known species to copulate in order to carry out internal fertilisation, according to a paper published on October 19 in the journal *Nature*.

Male fish had bony, L-shaped genital limbs called claspers which transferred sperm into the female, a more effective way of reproduction compared to spawning in the water, the study says.

The females, for their part, developed small, paired bones with which they locked the male organs in place in order to copulate.

"*Microbrachius*" means little arms, but scientists have been baffled for centuries by what these bony paired arms were actually there for," said John Long, a professor of palaeontology at Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia.

"We've solved this great mystery because they were there for mating, so that the male could position his claspers into the female genital area."

Until now, it was thought internal fertilisation occurred much later in the evolutionary tale of vertebrates.

Covered with thick, bony plates covering the head and trunk, placoderms ruled the world's oceans, rivers and lakes for around 70 million years. *M. dicki* fossils have also been found in Estonia and China.

They were then wiped out around 360 million years ago in a mysterious mass extinction.

For decades, they were deemed by many palaeontologists to be a curiosity, an evolutionary branch that failed.

But work by Mr Long and others found them to be far more important.

The creatures handed on features such as jaws, teeth and paired limbs that are seen today in reptiles, birds and mammals, including humans.

If the new study is right, the "claspers", over hundreds of millions of years, evolved into the penis.

Microbrachius' copulatory skill was uncovered last year when Mr Long stumbled across a fossil in a collection at the University of Technology in Tallinn, Estonia.

Males and females probably had sex side by side, with their bony jointed genitals locked together, according to the new investigation.

"This enabled the males to manoeuvre their genital organs into the right position for mating," Mr Long said.

The position looked, rather "weird", he admitted.

"With their arms interlocked, these fish looked more like they are square-dancing the do-si-do rather than mating."

Commenting on the research, Matt Friedman, from the University of Oxford, told the BBC, "The placoderm group is a well known group - the fossils are pretty common, and it's not as if this one was found in some far-off, exotic part of the world. It was found in Scotland. It is very remarkable that we haven't noticed this before."

— AFP

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GET YOUR FINGERS ON IT

the pulse

Ghosts are everywhere in Myanmar. Be afraid, be very afraid . . .



DOUGLAS LONG

Favou

A TICKET taker at a hip-hop concert notices a young woman slip past without paying the entrance fee. When he turns around to ask for her ticket, she disappears before his eyes. Later at the same show, the DJ notices a woman glaring at him from across the dance floor. After several seconds she vanishes, at which moment the DJ equipment loses power.

An editor at a local magazine approaches the small office where she works. Through the window, she sees a woman dressed in a yellow traditional outfit sitting at one of the desks. But the office is locked from the outside, which can only mean that none of her colleagues has arrived for work yet. When she looks again, the woman in yellow is gone.

Four employees at a downtown office stay after hours to catch up on Facebook. Each of them hears the distinct sound of someone wearing high heels circling the desks. The noise – sharp and clear on the concrete floor – stops for a few minutes before beginning again where it started, retracing the same path. No one present is wearing high heels.

Stranger than fiction

Bring up the subject of ghosts with nearly anyone in Myanmar, and they'll have a story or two about a spectral encounter involving themselves, coworkers, family members or close friends.

The phenomenon is also prevalent in nonfiction accounts about Myanmar. The title of Pascal Khoo Thwe's book *From the Land of Green Ghosts* (2002) refers to fears among the ethnic Padaung that victims of "raw death" – those who were murdered or died in accidents – tend to persist as evil spirits.

Late in the book, the author – one of a group of students who in 1988 fled into the mountains near the Thai border to avoid persecution by the Burmese government – describes a night during which he awakens and feels someone trying to filch his blanket.

The culprits, he finds, are "squatting with their faces turned away from us, shivering and groaning. Some of them seemed to be in uniform, some in civilian clothes, soaking wet and grey in colour ... There was a rush of wind and they disappeared like smoke."

Pascal Khoo Thwe and his companions later learn that they had set up camp on a site where the bodies of Burmese soldiers killed by Karenni rebels had been interred in haste and without proper burial rites.

Ma Thanegi, in her prison memoir *Nor Iron Bars a Cage* (2013), relates the tale of the "Great Haunting", which occurred one night in the upper story of a hall where prisoners were kept.

"That day, as evening fell, I kept getting goose bumps that came and went," she writes. "At about 9pm, just after taps, some of us in our cellblock were settling down to sleep. All of a sudden I heard an eerie wail of many voices rising to a crescendo as if in one voice. We all heard it: many voices rising in unison, a cry full of chilling despair."

While some of the inmates ran around in panic, the less excitable "saw that in a space where the poorest vagrants sleep near the far end of the hall,

a group of women stood in a circle as they fought, scratching each other. Their hair swung long and loose, covering their faces so no one could see who they were" before they disappeared.

Paranormal high-jinks

Whether told orally or in writing, ghost stories in Myanmar are often shared in a matter-of-fact way, as if their occurrence were a normal part of day-to-day life.

This tendency to avoid sensationalism in the telling of ghost stories was noted by Jane Ferguson, the author of an essay titled "Terminally Haunted", published by The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology last February.

Ferguson catalogues ghost lore among workers at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok and Mingalardon Airport in Yangon, including stories about ground crews, baggage handlers and tower communications workers at Mingalardon seeing ghosts "on the concrete apron near the terminal".

Pilots are also not immune to hauntings. One tower communications worker claimed that on two separate occasions "Myanmar Airways pilots reported that the auto-start was already engaged, even though they had just entered the cockpit and hadn't touched the instruments".

These airport ghosts are identified by Ferguson as *tasay* or *thaye*, which are described by American cultural anthropologist Melford Spiro in his 1967 book *Burmese Supernaturalism* as "beings who, as a consequence of evil committed in their past lives, have been reborn into their present disembodied state".

In remote rural areas of Myanmar, many villagers believe these ghosts can cause illness, disease or worse. According to Spiro's research, *tasay/thaye* "live on the outskirts of villages, especially near cemeteries, where they feed on corpses".

He writes, "They also enjoy the flesh of living people, however, and at times – when feeling especially hungry or malevolent, or under the control of a witch – they enter a village in order to attack and eat one of its inhabitants."

But the ghosts commonly described by residents of Yangon these days usually fall into a less malevolent category, described by Spiro as "the souls (*leikpya*) of the dead who, improperly escorted from their human habitat, remain to haunt people".

If certain mortuary rites are not performed at the time of death, "the soul, still attached to the scene of its previous existence, remains within the settlement and, in effect, becomes a ghost, haunting the inhabitants".

As a case in point, Yangon resident Yin Min Tun – the editor who saw the women in yellow sitting in her office – admitted to feeling shocked upon realising that she had seen a ghost, but she betrayed no fears about being devoured by malevolent spirits.

"Ghosts cannot do anything to us. They can't physically hurt us, so I'm more scared of people than of ghosts," she said.

Yin Min Tun also disputed the belief that ghosts harbour the power to cause disease.



Photos: Yu Yu

rite haunts



“Illness might come from the mental fear of seeing a ghost, but not because ghosts have the ability to make you ill,” she said.

School’s out ... forever

Another experienced hauntee from Yangon, Doi Ling, agreed that the power of ghosts was quite limited – they were likely unable to achieve much beyond stealing blankets or yanking people’s legs as they slept.

Doi Ling attended Basic Education High School 2 in Latha township in the early 1970s, when it still served as a boarding school for girls.

She said students who roomed there encountered a high incidence of nocturnal spectral activity – giving new meaning to the term “school spirit”.

While some of the ghosts seemed indigenous to the school, other hauntings were attributed to the institution’s proximity to Yangon General Hospital; it is perhaps testament to the quality of available healthcare that the hospital was overflowing with the restless souls of people who had expired there, prompting a few enterprising spirits to seek greener pastures at the adjacent school.

“We huddled together in groups at night to ward off ghosts,” Doi Ling said, adding that it was not unusual to hear someone – or something – walking the hallways after dark, wearing the same slippers that the students wore during the daytime.

Other incidents were more upsetting.

“One of our teachers had a stillborn baby, and when she later tried to have another baby she died during childbirth. After that, we saw her wandering around the school at night, in the form of a pregnant woman wearing a maternity dress,” she said.

Some of the stories at BEHS 2 Latha have achieved the status of urban folklore. With the institution dating back to 1861 – when it was founded as St John’s Convent School – it’s hard to determine exactly when they might have originated, but they were well-established by the time Doi Ling started attending the school in 1970.

Upon her arrival as a young student, she was told several harrowing tales by older girls, including one about the recurrent sound of a shower running in the washroom at 3am. Whenever the noise was investigated, the shower stall was found to be completely dry.

In another story, a nighttime hall monitor heard the sound of a ping-pong ball bouncing in an empty room down the hall. She entered the room just in time to see the ball rolling to a stop. She picked it up with a handkerchief, but it felt strangely warm in her hand. Opening the handkerchief, she found that she was holding not a ping-pong ball but a clot of blood and flesh.

A slightly more comical legend claims that some years ago, a group of girls were standing on a balcony whispering about the school being haunted by a ghost bearing a gunshot wound on his back. The girls suddenly noticed the rapid approach of a man, who upon reaching them said, “You mean like *this*?” He turned around to reveal a large, grisly hole between his shoulder blades. Screaming and running ensued.

These same stories were still being told to incoming students 10 years later. Another woman who attended the school around 1980, and who requested not to be named for fear of reprisal from the spirit world, said she heard similar legends from older girls. But by that time BEHS 2 Latha had stopped allowing students to spend the night, and so the opportunity to witness hauntings firsthand was greatly diminished.

Ghost busting

So, how does one get rid of ghosts? Methods vary, but prevention is the preferred approach.

Simple mortuary rites can help ensure that spirits let go of their connection to the material world, but sometimes a little extra effort is necessary.

Spiro, for example, describes the belief that deceased government officials are especially attached to their positions: “To prevent them from remaining in their offices, a special document is prepared, signed, and sometimes recited by the superior officer of the deceased, discharging the soul from all connections with his erstwhile position.”

More complicated rituals are needed to prevent wicked ghosts from hanging around causing trouble. Pascal Khoo Thwe describes the belief among the Padaung that spirits of “raw death” victims must be summoned into the coffin before burial, and then chased away from the cemetery with gunfire after the burial.

During the wake, musicians play metal frog-drums “believed to possess a powerful vibration, a ‘voice’ that could deafen the hearing organs of evil spirits”. Night-long funeral dances are performed around the coffin, and “a professional mourner or shaman would harangue the soul and exhort it to start on its great journey to the spirit world, describing the way and warning of all the dangers it would encounter”.

Despite these precautions, ghosts sometimes endure in the world of the living. In these cases, rural residents often turn to amulets, tattoos or *datloun* for protection; the latter are the product of an alchemical process in which shards of various metals – iron, copper, silver and gold – are melted to form an alloy that is used to make magical, protective rings. They are still made at some rural monasteries across the country.

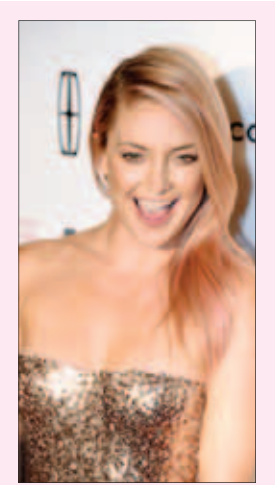
If a ghost does manage to lodge itself in the human habitat, it’s not uncommon to call upon Buddhist monks to perform an exorcism ceremony.

One expatriate manager at a medium-sized company’s branch office in Mandalay was recently called upon by his phantom-harried local colleagues to arrange just such a ceremony to oust a pesky poltergeist from the premises.

The ritual involved about 10 monks, who came to the office and spent 45 minutes reciting sections of the Buddhist suttas while the Myanmar employees prayed alongside.

“It was the strangest thing I’ve ever had to put on the expense account,” the manager said. “But after that, the office was ghost-free.”

The Global Gossip



Actress Kate Hudson attends the 28th American Cinematheque Award honouring Matthew McConaughey at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills on October 21. Photo: AFP/Mark Ralston

LOS ANGELES
'Goodfellas' actor sues 'The Simpsons' for US\$250 mn
Goodfellas actor Frank Sivero is suing Fox Television for US\$250 million for allegedly ripping off his wise-guy cinematic character and using it on *The Simpsons*.
According to a lawsuit filed in Los Angeles on October 21, Sivero also claims producers of the hit cartoon series promised to make a film with him but reneged, and were simply using him to study his character.
Sivero played mobster Frankie Carbone in Martin Scorsese's 1990 classic *Goodfellas*. He claims *The Simpsons* stole the character and used it for Louie, a member of the Springfield Mafia.
Sivero, 62, said in 1989 that he was living in the same Los Angeles-area apartment complex as *The Simpsons* writers.
Goodfellas was released the next year and was a box office and critical hit, winning an Oscar and earning nearly twice its \$25-million budget in the US alone, according to the lawsuit.
Sivero is demanding \$50 million in damages for loss of his likeness, \$100 million for improper interference and \$100 million for appropriation of his "confidential" idea.

LOS ANGELES
Christian Bale to play Apple's Steve Jobs
Oscar-winner Christian Bale, best known for his star turn in the *Batman* film franchise, will play Apple co-founder Steve Jobs in an upcoming biopic.
"We needed the best actor on the board in a certain age range and that's Chris Bale," the film's screenwriter Aaron Sorkin said, in an interview with Bloomberg Television.
Sorkin, who also wrote the screenplay for the Academy award-winning movie *The Social Network* about Facebook and its co-founder Mark Zuckerberg, said giving the lead role to Bale was an easy call.
"He didn't have to audition," he said.
"He [Bale] has more words to say in this movie than most people have in three movies combined," said Sorkin, who is writing the script for Sony Pictures based on the 2011 biography *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson.
"There isn't a scene or a frame that he's not in. So it's an extremely difficult part and he is going to crush it," he said.



Bale attends the 86th Academy Awards in Hollywood on March 2. Photo: AFP/Robyn Beck



Matthew McConaughey attends the 28th American Cinematheque Award honouring his acting career at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills on October 21. Photo: AFP/Mark Ralston

GENEVA
Switzerland wants yodelling, watchmaking on UNESCO heritage list
Switzerland announced October 22 it would like the Alpine country's deep-seated traditions such as yodelling and precision watchmaking to be inscribed on a United Nations global heritage list.
The Swiss government said it planned from 2015 to submit a dozen candidates for listing by UNESCO, the world body's cultural arm.
UNESCO, better known for registering historic buildings or natural sites, also lists what are considered key parts of the globe's "intangible heritage".
In addition to yodelling and watchmaking, the Swiss want UNESCO to list the country's tradition of graphic and typographic design – epitomised by the Helvetica font.
Also in the running are the Alpine livestock season, marked by ceremonies in which herders take their animals to and from the mountains, as well as the Easter processions in the town of Mendrisio, and the Winemakers' Festival in the Lake Geneva city of Vevey, held every 20 years. – AFP

LOS ANGELES
'Healthy' Zellweger responds to storm over new look
Renee Zellweger hit back October 22 at the online furore triggered by her new-look face.
The 45-year-old Oscar-winner told *People* magazine she had not been "taking care of myself", but is now back to health. "I'm glad folks think I look different! I'm living a different, happy, more fulfilling life, and I'm thrilled that perhaps it shows," Zellweger said.
Zellweger sparked a global firestorm of online comment after she appeared at a Hollywood women's awards show October 20. Her face appeared radically different, fueling talk that she had had plastic surgery.
She has not appeared in a new film since 2010's *My Own Love Song*. Her latest movie, *The Whole Truth*, is due out next year.
Zellweger told *People*, "My friends say that I look peaceful. I am healthy."



Renee Zellweger arrives at the premiere of Appaloosa in Beverly Hills on September 17, 2008. Photo: AFP/Gabriel Bouys



Patrons won't recognise the old Mya Yanadar Cinema. Photos: Supplied

NANDAR AUNG
nandaraung.mcm@gmail.com
THE city is up one cinema. If you visited the old two-storey Mya Yanadar Cinema in Thaketa township last year, all you would have seen is a faded building with its door boarded over and nailed shut. Until recently, it had been closed since the 1980s.
Now the theatre is open, with the smell of freshly popped popcorn filling the air.
"It is a long time the old cinema has been closed," said U Aung Thu, administrative manager of Royal Ace Mega Company Ltd, the new owner which also operates the Aung Tha

Pyay cinema in Nay Pyi Taw. "Now we've renovated it in a modern style and to the international standard."
Inside the building, two movie screens are on the first floor, while the upper floor is a hall available to rent for weddings or other celebrations.
No one seems to know when the original government-owned theatre opened, but since it changed hands it has been open to the public since October 18.
"In this time, we need more cinemas to be opened. When I was young, there were over 100 cinemas [in Yangon]," said U Aye Kyuu Lay, vice president of the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization. "Later almost all were closed and only a

few were left. When the number of cinemas increases or decreases, it matters to the future of the film industry in Myanmar."
The cinema is separated into Cineplex 1 and Cineplex 2, and each one has 171 seats. Myanmar films as well as international films will play five times per day.
Film showing times are 10am, 12:30pm, 3:30pm, 6:30pm and 9:30pm.
Ticket prices for 2D films will range from K1000 to K4500. Prices for 3D films will range from K1500 to K5500.
Mya Yadanar Cinema is located at the corner of Myin Taw Thar Street and Zin Ga Ma Street, 5th quarter, Thaketa township.

WEEKLY PREDICTIONS OCTOBER 27 - NOVEMBER 2, 2014

AQUARIUS | Jan 20 – Feb 18



Any unethical behaviour is self-sabotaging and repels people. Never break your commitments unless you responsibly communicate your change in commitment to everyone depending on you. Know that relationships are the platform for extraordinary results. Expect brilliant news to grant your heartfelt wish.

PISCES | Feb 19 – March 20



The more you respect another person, the more you will get love and trust from others. Prioritise the things that you want from your life and bring balance to it. Know that self-awareness is the most important catalyst for positive change.

ARIES | March 21 – April 19



Mistrust destroys relationships. The moment you blame anyone for anything your relationship and personal power deteriorate. The most enlightening thing you can do is to listen to another human being. Make a practice of asking questions and listen to the answers without any frustration.

TAURUS | April 20 – May 20



A bright new chapter in your life now begins if you turn over a new leaf and make some kind of positive change in your life or choice of friends. You will flirt in a lighthearted atmosphere and enjoy a period of being a social butterfly. Don't take on meaningless challenges; it's a losing game.

GEMINI | May 21 – June 20



It's more important to show your feelings through actions than it is to express them verbally. Show people you love them through your caring and commitment. There is no better way to learn about yourself than by listening to a wiser person. A compatible partner is not a desperate one.

CANCER | June 21 – July 22



You are not aware of who you are, and if you can't be honest with somebody else then you don't have a healthy relationship with yourself. Learn how to set up your own rules within a rigorous environment. Aim to retain your dignity in any condition. A weak heart cannot toughen the skin of love.

LEO | July 23 – Aug 22



A valuable distance between two people is a good smile and simple language of body. Know that poor communication is not the source of most conflicts, but misunderstanding always leads to misconceptions that make conflicts grow over time. Emotional difference can change into true love.

VIRGO | Aug 23 – Sept 22



The only way to create new operating standards is to challenge current paradigms. Know that all success comes from a combination of implementation and knowledge. Never wait for your account to manage you. Prosperity will attract prosperity. Emotional confidence comes from balance.

Curtain goes up at renovated cinema in Thaketa



What's on

OCTOBER 27 - NOVEMBER 2

Got an event?
List it in What's On!
whatsonmt@gmail.com

ART

Sept 26-Nov 1 "The Mirror: Reflecting Society": Painting, sculpture, installation and photography by four Myanmar contemporary artists. TS1 Gallery, between Lanthit Jetty and Kaing Dan No 1 Jetty, Seikkan 10am-6:30pm

Oct 25-29 "Beautiful Myanmar": Photos from Shan State by Kyaw Kyaw Win. Gallery 65, 65 Yaw Min Gyi Road, 10am-6pm

Nov 1-5 "Uncovering H Lwin": Oil painting by H Lwin. The Yangon Gallery, People's Park, near the Planetarium, Ahlone Road, Dagon 10am-6pm

FILM

Oct 28- Nov 2 Memory! International Film Heritage Festival. Screening nine classics from around the world. Free admission. Program at www.memoryfilmfestival.org/ Yangon. Nay Pyi Taw Cinema

Start times at Mingalar (1, 2), Thwin, Shae Shaung (1,2) and Nay Pyi Taw cinemas are 10am, noon, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm and 8pm. Start times at Junction Square and Maw Tin are 10am, 1pm and 4pm daily and 7pm and 9:30pm on Friday and Saturday.

Start times at Mingalar San Pya are 10am, 12:30pm, 3:30pm, 6:30pm and 9:30pm.

Nay Pyi Taw Cinema, near Sule Pagoda

The Equalizer: The Dawn of Justice. Directed by Antoine Fuqua. A former black ops commando is drawn back to fight Russian gangsters.

Bang Bang. Directed by Siddharth Anand.

A bank receptionist and a charming vigilante go on a transcontinental chase.

Mingalar Cinema 2, at Dagon Center 2, Myaynigone

The Box Trolls. Directed by Anthony Stacchi and Graham Annable. A fantasy-comedy in 3D stop-motion animation.

Shae Shaung Cinema, Sule Pagoda

Road, Kyauktada

Dracula Untold. Directed

by Gary Shore. The true

story of Vlad the Impaler

is combined with the

myth of Dracula.

Bang Bang.

Junction Square

Cineplex, Kamaryut

Annabelle. Directed

by Kevin Carraway. A

demon-possessed toy

doll terrorises a young

family.

Reclaim. Directed by

Alan White. Americans

abroad stumble into a

high-stakes underground

scheme and must save

their daughter.

Mingalar San Pya Cineplex, Phone Gyi

Street and Anawrahta, Lanmadaw

The Equalizer.

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Photos by Kyaw Kyaw Win are on show at Gallery 65 until October 29.

MISC

Oct 21-31 Halloween Book Fair.

Halloween-related books, food,

decorations and costumes for sale.

Bookworm Books, 2nd floor, Waizayantar

Orange Shopping Centre, Waizayantar

Road, Thingangyun 9am-10:30pm

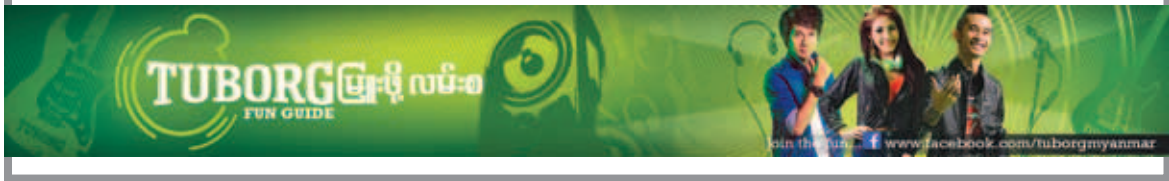
Oct 28 Gallery conversation and drinks.

Pansodan Gallery, 289 Pansodan Street,

Kyauktada 7pm-late

Oct 31 Halloween party. Gallery Bar, Sule

Shangri-La Hotel 6pm



AUNG MYIN KYAW
4th floor, 113, Thmain Bayan Road, Tarmwe township, Yangon.
Tel: 09-731-35632, email: williameaste@gmail.com

LIBRA | Sept 23 – Oct 22



Never calculate your worth based upon a misguided value system. Get prepared to go it alone once you have chosen personal freedom and individual courage. Keep in mind to maintain hope and not quit. Your sense of faith and possibility must be under your intellectual control all the time.

SCORPIO | Oct 23 – Nov 21



Believers are scared of nothing. Many people live in apprehension of the future because of poor knowledge and ignorance. You must put adventure into your life. Giving thought to an ideal or objective is the best way to succeed. God helps those who help themselves, even in emotional affairs.

SAGITTARIUS | Nov 22 – Dec 21



Question yourself and enjoy questioning yourself. Pursue an understanding of how others perceive you, and seek out your character flaws and find ways to remedy them. Balance your needs and wants. Start looking at problems with new eyes and your insight will become developed.

CAPRICORN | Dec 22 – Jan 19



Get full of enthusiasm, and never allow yourself to be defeated. Know the value of social communication and pay attention to building your platform. A heavy duty will soon be on your shoulders. Negotiate with a new partner who may have an emotional answer for you.

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HONG KONG

No black No white No red

Exhibition of banned art inquires into the prejudices of past Myanmar regimes

WHITNEY LIGHT

light.whitney@gmail.com

THOUGH repressed by censors through the majority of his career, artist Myint San Myint never lost his sense of humour.

He recalls one time he attempted to exhibit "Illustration", a painting/installation meant to mock the military government's deficit of small notes. If something cost K50 and all you had was a K100, Myint San Myint explained, there was no change. So he painted a beggar's bowl, and underneath he posted a notice to viewers.

"Please pay K50 to look at the painting. If you don't have it, look for free. If you have only K100, you can use the gallery building's toilet for free," read the rough translation.

"The censors made me take down the instructions," the 50-year-old painter said. "They got upset, and I laughed. I wanted to express my feeling about regular people getting ripped off."

That painting – along with over 50 others made by more than 20 artists who worked for decades under censorship – is now on display in "Banned in Burma", an exhibit running at the Nock Art Foundation in Hong Kong until November 9.

Curated by scholar Melissa Carlson and collector Ian Holliday with the help of Yangon gallerists Pyay Way and Aung Soe Min, the show gives a long overdue platform for works never, or only privately, shown. It encourages analysis of the past military regimes through the lens of the art they read as dissenting or counter to their own mythologising of history and national identity.

"These pieces are such treasures because each one captures the fears, paranoias and even national aspirations of the military governments," said Carlson, who, as



part of a master's program at Johns Hopkins University in 2012, examined the impact on Myanmar modern art of the post-1964 censorship regime, as carried out by the defunct Press Scrutiny and Registration Division.

According to Carlson and the artists themselves, censored paintings were typically those that departed from a narrow and conservative idea of traditional morals, culture and identity, as well as those that appeared to communicate political dissent – whether or not they actually did.

The nude was off-limits, the exhibition catalogue points out. So was contrasting black and white, for the potential to symbolise good versus evil, and red, because it might stand for blood, revolution or, after 1988, the National League for Democracy.

Although most artists were experimenting with modern

movements in painting already well-known and appreciated in other parts of the world – symbolism, impressionism, surrealism, abstract expressionism – in Myanmar these were still dangerously radical.

"I painted from my feeling, but the censors would see it from another point of view," said artist San Minn, 64, who described his work as surrealist. He collected what information he could about the art world from copies of *Time* magazine and books rummaged at roadside stands on Pansodan Street.

Totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century have often shown a predilection for art of a certain barren and gratuitous quality – a phenomenon so recognisable in the kitsch artwork of the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy and the People's Republic of China that in 1990 the art historian Igor Golomstock published *Totalitarian Art*, an analysis of the aesthetic similarities of state-sponsored art which he termed "total realism".

Here, San Minn said, the censors used a big stamp that said "Not Allowed" in Myanmar language to mar the front and back of a painting. They would keep it for two months, he said, before returning it to the artist as a warning, though he sometimes wasn't sure what aspect of the rejected work had upset them.

The exhibition catalogue notes that the wording of the 1964 legal code which censors were supposed to follow was ambiguous, resulting in ad-hoc judgments by a rotating cast of officials with little or no knowledge of art.

Gallerists could only hope that their shows would be permitted to open when the censor came around on opening day.

Nonetheless, the regime succeeded in imposing a "dictatorship of taste", as the Russian futurist poet Vladimir Mayakovsky once put it.

Based on her research, Carlson described the military government's aesthetic conception of national identity as "almost uber traditional and agrarian – scenes of rice paddies, women bathing, et cetera".

The government took pains to maintain this image, she added, because it "wanted to deflect viewers from real life and how [it] came into power".

From 1968 to 1972, artist Maung Theid Dhi, 65, was enrolled in the State School of Fine Arts in Yangon.

"They taught realism mostly, and basic theories," he said. "Not modern art. We didn't learn enough."

When he left school, he said, there were only two artists in the country

who could be called modern – Paw Oo Thett and Khin One, both now deceased. Maung Theid Dhi sought out both as mentors. From Paw Oo Thett he learned about line, and from Khin One he learned how to express ideas and plan each painting with intent, he said.

His artistic liberation came at the cost of his freedom. One of the works Maung Theid Dhi is presenting in Hong Kong is a self-portrait in which his face is encircled by chains. He was denied permission to show it in 1974. In 1978, he made a similar portrait, an installation with a metal chain and ox skull. He included it in a group exhibition that year that was promptly shut down. The installation was destroyed and Maung Theid Dhi went to jail for a week.

Later he worked at many things besides art to make a living – in construction, as a security guard and, for a couple years, in business in Thailand. In private with artist friends, however, it was a different story.



Artist Myint San Myint and "Illustration", 2011.

"We always talked about art and politics and how we could express politics through our art," San Minn said. From 1974 to 1980, he and fellow artists would share their work and discuss how to develop it in terms of the trends and techniques they gleaned from books about artists like Dali, Chagall and Picasso.

"Perhaps censorship even further inspired them as artists as it became apparent what the Board would and would not censor and they could play upon these themes in their art," said Carlson. In a forthcoming publication, she considers whether unique artistic vocabularies developed out of the desire to circumvent censorship.

For example, in Kin Maung Yin's

series called "Seated Dancer", Carlson said, dancers portrayed without hands, legs or smiles "could convey his distress over Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest". In other works he played with red, black and white, "the very colours that made the censors nervous".

Though some of these works are sure to be striking for viewers, Carlson said that, for her, some of the most powerful works were those that could not be shown because they are damaged or no longer exist.

"I was most moved by artists who described their banned or censored paintings from memory, which gave the project [exhibition] added urgency as the need became apparent to document actual works before they were lost to the unforgiving climate of Myanmar, passage of time or [sale]."

Since the political reforms of 2011, there is interest internationally in how art in Myanmar might be changing. The exhibition will also present a few more recent works, to suggest the direction in which the art scene may be moving.

But the answers might not yet be those viewers would hope or expect.



San Minn, "Civilization", 2003. Photos: Supplied



Artist Maung Theid Dhi and his work.

Carlson said some artists, who told her censorship had never stifled their artistic vision, also showed her in private artworks that they would not exhibit in Myanmar even today – "whether because they still do not trust the current government or because they are not quite convinced that censorship of the visual arts is over".

In the limbo between totalitarianism and democracy, will self-censorship be the new regime?

"Banned in Burma" runs until November 9 at the Nock Art Foundation, Hong Kong, and will be shown again at the Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre from November 29 to December 1.

NEW YORK

Tributes for Oscar de la Renta, who defined romantic glamour

JENNIE MATTHEW

OSCAR de la Renta dressed generations of the world's most iconic women, from former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy to lawyer

Amal Alamuddin, bride to modern Hollywood royal George Clooney.

Tributes poured in on October 21 for the Dominican-born designer, who moved to New York in the 1960s and defined American fashion over five decades, creating a multi-million-dollar fashion house.

He died at home in Connecticut on October 20, surrounded by friends and family. He was 82 and had been diagnosed with cancer in 2006.

"He died exactly as he lived: with tremendous grace, great dignity and very much on his own terms," said step-daughter Eliza Bolen and son-in-law Alex, executives at his company.

"While our hearts are broken by the idea of life without Oscar, he is still very much with us," the pair wrote, in a handwritten note posted on the company website.

"Through Oscar's example, we know the way forward. We will make

Oscar very proud of us by continuing in an even stronger way the work that Oscar loved so much."

De la Renta was one of the world's most eminent designers, and possessed a mastery of European couture.

Most recently, he designed the wedding dress for British human rights lawyer Alamuddin, who wed Hollywood star Clooney in Venice last month.

His couture and ready-to-wear, with their signature romantic glamour, were favoured by first ladies from Jacqueline Kennedy to Michelle Obama, and Hollywood stars like Sarah Jessica Parker.

Former president Bill Clinton and wife Hillary, who is tipped to run for the White House in 2016, paid tribute to a "dear friend".

"His singular talent and exquisite taste elevated American fashion, and his warmth and friendship will be missed by our family and all whose lives he touched," the Clintons said.

Former first lady Laura Bush said she would miss "Oscar's generous and warm personality", and former first lady Nancy Reagan, 93, said

America had lost "a brilliant, enduring talent and a true gentleman", and that she had lost a friend of nearly 50 years.

In Santo Domingo, President Danilo Medina declared a national day of mourning for the designer who also had a home in his birth country. "His departure leaves a void that is just impossible to fill," Medina said.

The fashion world paid tribute to the friendship and artistry of the two-time president of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, who married European sophistication with American cool.

Vogue editor in chief Anna Wintour wrote a deeply personal tribute, calling de la Renta "everything you could want a friend to be" and saying that he had decided to stop treatment last week.

"His last words to me were 'I love you,' and I said 'I love you' back,"



Oscar de la Renta, with Carla Bruni (left) and models, greets an audience at his spring-summer 1993 fashion show in Paris on October 21, 1992. Photo: Pierre Guillaud/AFP

she wrote of seeing him last weekend in Kent. Parker, whose

character Carrie in *Sex and the City* modeled a de la Renta gown in a pre-wedding *Vogue* photo shoot, mourned the loss of the "beloved and resplendent" designer.

Born on July 22, 1932, in the Dominican Republic, de la Renta studied art in Madrid and worked as an apprentice to Cristobal Balenciaga before embarking on his own career.

In 1960, he became an assistant at Lanvin in Paris, where he embedded himself in the world of haute couture before moving to the United States to work for Elizabeth Arden.

He created his eponymous label in 1965 and became one of the most lauded New York designers, helping to put American fashion on the map and inspiring generations of younger designers.

He created clothes of timeless elegance, regal glamour and

sophistication that were a hit with Manhattan ladies who lunch, Hollywood actresses and members of royalty.

He became a US citizen in 1969 and was the first American designer appointed to a prominent role at a European house. He designed haute couture collections for Pierre Balmain from 1993 to 2002.

He built up a hugely successful family-run company that produced two runway shows a year in New York, ready-to-wear, accessories, fragrances, children's wear, bridal wear and a home line.

Popular and charming, de la Renta forged close friendships and entertained generously at home in New York, Connecticut and the Dominican Republic with guests ranging from the Clintons to Henry Kissinger and the late writer Truman Capote.

He married twice. After his first wife Francoise de Langlade, an editor at French *Vogue*, died, he wed philanthropist Annette Reed.

He is survived by his second wife, an adopted son and three step-children. - AFP

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Artist on the cutting edge

Zon Ei Phyu is carving out her professional niche with little more than knives, paper and glue



Zon Ei Phyu displays a paper creation. Photos: Supplied

NANDAR AUNG
nandaraung.mcm@gmail.com

WHEN others went overseas to buy fashion accessories, I preferred to shop for knives, paper and glue," said Zon Ei Phyu, 28, while using a fine, rounded knife to put the finishing touches on a bridal gown made of yellow paper. It was an invitation card made for her best friend's wedding.

Whereas other girls carry lipstick and eyeliner in their bag, Zon Ei Phyu keeps the various knives she uses to make her paper art. Her fingers and hands are noticeably marked with scars.

While paper-cut artists are common in other countries, in Myanmar barely ten are known,

Zon Ei Phyu among them. This year she has already exhibited in Japan and Malaysia, at the Institute Francais in Yangon, and as the only female contemporary artist represented in "Mirror: Reflecting Society", a recent show at TS1 gallery. There she presented "The Tree of Dreams", a paper tree on which viewers were invited to hang paper leaves inscribed with personal messages.

"If you want to make a sculpture, you need to find wood and you need to know how to make a sculpture. Paper you can get any place and any time. If you have a knife and glue - that is good enough for me," she said.

As a child she liked to use colourful papers to make dolls, rings and necklaces, as well objects in her environment and scenes of events. Her parents' only daughter, Zon

Ei Phyu found that she could pass many happy hours of paper cutting all by herself.

By the time she was 5, she already enjoyed painting. At 11, she won a gold prize at the Fukuoka Child Art Competition in Japan. As a teenager, she took acrylic and water-colour painting lessons from Ma Sandar Khine, an artist who specialises in painting nudes. The student and teacher showed their work together in a group exhibition.

"When I paint, it's usually about rooms in bright acrylic colours," Zon Ei Phyu said. "I wanted to be an architect just like my father. That's why my paintings were so full of lines."

At that time, however, women weren't allowed to attend university architectural studies programs. After her matriculation with full distinction, she chose medicine, as per her family's wishes.

Through her time in university she became disconnected with art, but after four years she was both a doctor and an artist. She chose to pursue the latter profession.

In 2011, she was about to go to Tokyo for a three-month Open Studio residency when she learned through the internet about paper cutting as an art form. She knew then that she wanted to focus her skills on it.

"At that time I was not a professional artist, and I had not graduated from art school like other artists," she said. "I was worried and scared about representing Myanmar as an artist [in Japan]. But I tried my best and everything was fine."

By the time the Tokyo residency was over in 2012, she'd learned a lot about innovations in contemporary art around the world. Inspired, she aimed to make her paper-cut pieces fresh and new.

But in Myanmar, she found that other artists were not accepting of her new medium.

"I accept that each nation has its own culture. But if artists aren't allowed to develop and just stay with the old ways, I'm sure that they face a lack of freedom," she said. "Also, most people still think that a painting must be a portrait or a landscape in a frame on the wall. I think that old way of thinking must change."



A paper-cut portrait. Photo: Supplied

She decided to make works that could be described as a hybrid between painting and paper cutting. Examples decorate the walls all over her family's three-storey detached house. Her work desk is in her bedroom and takes up one-third of the space. She spends most of her time here as soon as she's finished her duties in the family business, she said. Six A3-size cutting mats are attached to the table, which is also covered with various-size knives, scissors, bundles of coloured paper and tubes and bottles of glue.

The bedroom shelves are lined with her paper toys.

"Paper-cut art is so fine and easy to destroy, not like acrylic or water-colour paintings, so I'm careful with them," she said. Becoming philosophical, she added, "It's the same with the human world - changeable and easy to ruin. And as in nature, everything has a positive and a negative. In paper-cut art, you have the desired cut piece, which can be said to be positive, and the remainder, which is negative. It is the same with the human world - there are good things and bad things."

With the "opening-up" of the country, she said she thinks the art scene has grown and improved. Yet with the changes, she said she also notices that people seem to have lost their attention to the arts, which have become more direct in their messaging.

Under censorship, she said, "artists were using indirect meanings in their poems and art because of the military government. The indirect or ornate meanings made the audience think and feel."

Now people don't use the same effort to read works of art, she said. "They think no more of a painting or poem after they've seen it."

She intends to make art with indirect meaning and interactive elements, similar to the "The Tree of Dreams", she said.

Now she is finishing wedding invitations for her friend, but in December she will participate in the festival Beyond Pressure, organised by artist Moe Satt. And in February she plans to open her own gallery.

"I faced many difficulties when I decided to create the paper-cut art on my own," she said. "I want to make a workshop where people can study this art. Sharing is my desire for the future."

**Roasting Coffee ...
Brewing Harmony ...**

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food

A grown-up way to eat hot dogs

MY husband John recently opened a clubhouse as part of his business in rental property. So every weekend we've been busy hosting friends and families at the poolside as well as potential tenants who come to inspect the housing. After swimming in the pool, the kids are hungry and asking for a feast. John likes to serve his Oz-style hot dogs – a sausage on a slice of bread with sauce. It's easy and everyone likes it. But as you can imagine, after cooking and eating the same thing several weekends in a row, I needed to make a twist on these sausage meals. I decided to experiment with salads. I call these recipes fusion, or modern Australian cuisine.

CHICKEN-FRANK SALAD 1

Serves 6

- 5 chicken franks
- 1 bunch of salad leaves
- 2 small green chillies
- 1 tbsp chili sauce

- 1 tsp fish sauce
- 2 onions
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

Prepare the sausages as per the instructions, or prick them with a fork and put them in a non-stick frying pan. Add water to cover one-third the height of the sausages. Cook over medium heat. Cover the frying pan with a lid. When most of the water is evaporated, add 1 teaspoon of vegetable oil and fry them for 2-3 minutes. Turn the heat off, cover with the lid and rest for another 2-3 minutes. Then slice them and add them to a big salad bowl. Slice the onions and soak them in water for 5 minutes. Then wash the onions and squeeze the water out. Pat dry. Slice the salad leaves finely. (I use local salad leaves). Put the onions, salad leaves, chopped chilli, chilli sauce, fish sauce and remaining vegetable oil into the salad bowl and mix well. Serve with rice. Taste before adding more salt because the fish sauce will make it salty.



CHICKEN-FRANK SALAD 2

Serves 6

- 5 chicken franks
- 1 bunch of salad leaves

- 1 tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tsp whole-grain mustard sauce
- 100g cherry tomatoes

Prepare the sausage as per instructions, or as per the directions for salad 1. Slice the sausages and add them to a big salad bowl. Halve the cherry tomatoes and prepare the salad leaves. Add salad leaves, mayonnaise, mustard and cherry tomatoes to the bowl and mix well. Serve with bread. Add salt and pepper to taste.

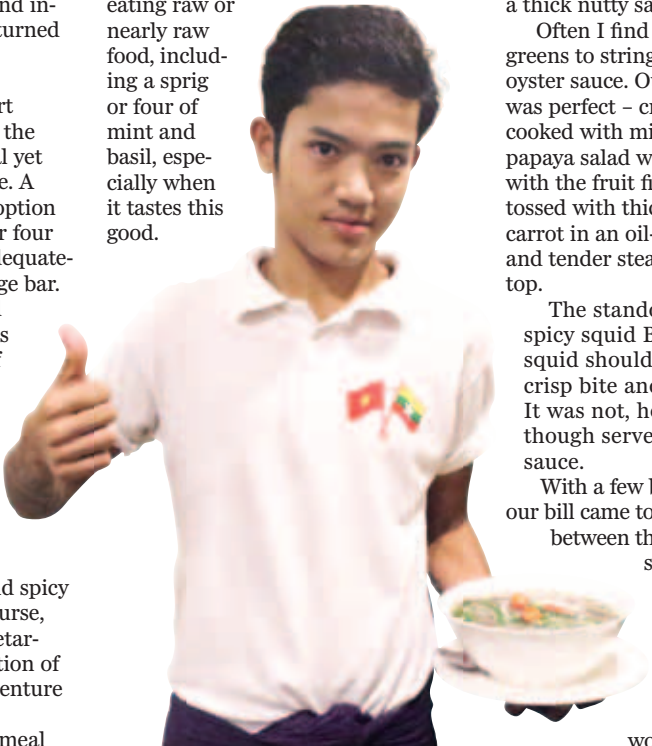
PHYO ARBIDANS
phyo.arbidans@gmail.com

Restaurant Review

No faux pho, just simple Vietnamese food prepared well

WHITNEY LIGHT
light.whitney@gmail.com

TUCKED down a narrow lane and behind a multi-storey business centre, Vietnam Kitchen is a hidden gem. Since it opened about five months ago, I'd been hearing good things about its generous, delicious and inexpensive beef pho, and, as it turned out, there is much more to recommend. Elegant lanterns, tasteful art and dark-wood finishings give the spacious dining rooms a casual yet slightly dressed-up atmosphere. A large covered patio offers the option of dining outdoors at tables for four or eight, attended by polite, adequately competent service and a large bar. Our group of three selected from across the menu, which is large but within the bounds of the cuisine advertised. From a page of similar salads we chose the green papaya with prawns (K6500); from the rolls, fresh spring rolls with prawns (K4800 for four); from the greens, fried chayote (K3500); from the grilled meats and fish, salty and spicy squid BBQ (K7500); and, of course, the beef pho (K3000). For vegetarians, there is also a good selection of tofu dishes though we didn't venture into them. The pho, easily a generous meal



for one, was fragrant and good though the beef was chewy. But by then we were more impressed with the other dishes, all of which were deliciously light and tasty. Our meal felt almost like a detox session. There is something very reassuring and cleansing about eating raw or nearly raw food, including a sprig or four of mint and basil, especially when it tastes this good.

The spring rolls, to my surprise, were papery dry rather than sticky to the touch – one of our party explained that this was because the papers had been made in-house rather than reconstituted with hot water. They were filled with a generous amount of basil and served with a thick nutty sauce. Often I find kitchens tend to fry greens to stringy in too much oil or oyster sauce. Our chayote, however, was perfect – crisp stalks lightly cooked with minced garlic. The papaya salad was similarly refreshing, with the fruit finely shredded and tossed with thicker julienned sticks of carrot in an oil-free dressing. Plump and tender steamed shrimp lay on top. The standout dish was the spicy squid BBQ, which is how all squid should be – with a slightly crisp bite and no chewiness at all. It was not, however, very spicy, though served with piquant chilli sauce. With a few bottles of Myanmar our bill came to just over K40,000 between three people, very reasonable considering the quality and portions. We left feeling like we could eat here every night, which, if you're worried about your oil intake, wouldn't be a bad idea.



Photos: Yu Yu

Vietnam Kitchen

1A Phosein Road, Bahan (near Chatrium Hotel)
Phone 01-524709
vietnamkitchen.myanmar@gmail.com

Restaurant Rating

★★★★★

Food	10
Beverage	8
Service	8
Value for money	9
X-factor	8



Tokyo Film Festival

Myanmar Times photographer Kaung Htet was in Tokyo shooting guests on the red carpet and mingling at social events with the likes of cinematographer Christopher Doyle. The opening ceremony featured an appearance by Her Imperial High Princess Takamado and other dignitaries, as well as Don Hall and Chris Williams, directors of the opening film, Big Hero 6. The festival is on until October 31.



Jella Laura Fink and Stefan Bachtold



Win Maw, Yan Naing and Ba Gyi

Burma VJ' screening

DVB video journalists Win Maw, Yan Naing and Ba Gyi, whose footage shot in 2007 made up the bulk of the Oscar-nominated documentary Burma VJ, were on hand during its first Yangon screening. The film played to a packed house at Myanmar Deitta on October 16.



Power in a bottle

Bison Energy Drink celebrated its product launch at Sedona Hotel on October 22. Celebrities joined the event, and supermodel and TV star Patricia was named brand ambassador.



Htet Htet Tun





Food expo
Myanfood 2014, a major event for the food, drinks and hospitality industry, took over Tatmadaw Hall October 15-17, with exhibitors representing brands and products from around the world.



Ricky Rames, Mr Victor, Ma Ei Thu Kyaw

Yasin Bin , Ibrahim, May Myat Noe, Steve Holtz

Mo Mo's birthday

Mo Mo the elephant turned 61 last week, and to celebrate the zoo held a birthday party on October 19 including music and magic shows. There was also a cake of sorts presented to the beloved pachyderm, who blew out the candles and did a little dance.



Guests look at the PH Artichocke



Danish Ambassador Peter Lysholt Hansen gives a lucky-draw prize

Lighting product launch

Let there be light! Louis Poulsen lighting products were launched at Decorum showroom on October 15. Danish Ambassador Peter Lysholt Hansen joined the event along with brand representatives and Joost van Kesteren, CEO of Decorum.



Daimian S Hines, SPA Project Management



Linn Linn Soe Lwin and Joost van Kesteren explain the products

TUBORG

FUN GUIDE

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DOMESTIC FLIGHT SCHEDULES

YANGON TO NAY PYI TAW				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
FMI A1	1,2,3,4,5	7:15	8:15	
FMI B1	1,2,3,4,5	10:45	11:45	
FMI C1	1,2,3,4,5	17:00	18:00	

YANGON TO MANDALAY				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 909	1,2,5	6:00	7:40	
K7 282	Daily	6:00	8:10	
YH 917	3	6:00	7:40	
YH 917	2,4,5,6,7	6:10	8:30	
Y5 775	Daily	6:15	7:25	
6T 401	Daily	6:20	8:30	
YH 831	4,6	7:00	8:40	
YH 633	7	7:00	8:40	
YH 835	1	7:00	12:55	
K7 266	Daily	8:00	10:05	
7Y 131	Daily	8:10	10:15	
YH 727	1	11:15	13:25	
YH 729	2,4,6	11:15	14:15	
YH 737	3	11:15	13:25	
YH 737	5,7	11:30	13:40	
YH 835	7	11:30	13:10	
YH 911	2	12:30	14:10	
YH 829	5	12:30	14:10	
K7 822	2,4,7	12:30	16:55	
7Y 941	1,3,4,6	12:40	14:05	
7Y 943	2,5,7	12:40	14:05	
K7 622	1,3,5,7	13:00	14:25	
K7 226	2,4,6	13:30	14:55	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	14:00	15:55	
7Y 241	2,5,7	14:30	16:25	
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	14:30	16:35	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,5,7	15:00	17:10	
Y5 234	Daily	17:45	18:55	
7Y 242	1,3,4,6	18:30	19:55	
7Y 242	2,5,7	19:00	20:25	

YANGON TO NYAUNG U				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
K7 282	Daily	6:00	7:20	
YH 917	3	6:00	8:25	
YH 909	1,2,5	6:00	8:25	
YH 917	2,4,5,6,7	6:10	7:45	
YH 909	6	6:15	7:50	
6T 401	Daily	6:20	7:40	
YH 917	1	6:30	8:05	
YH 909	3	6:30	8:05	
YH 909	4,7	7:00	8:35	
YH 633	5	7:00	8:35	
K7 242	Daily	7:00	8:20	
7Y 131	Daily	8:10	9:30	
7Y 431	1,3,4,6	8:20	9:40	
7Y 121	2,5,7	8:20	9:40	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	14:00	16:40	
7Y 241	2,5,7	14:30	17:10	
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	14:30	17:25	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,5,7	15:00	17:55	
YH 731	6	15:30	17:50	

YANGON TO MYITKYINA				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 835	1	7:00	9:40	
YH 831	4,6	7:00	10:35	
YH 835	7	11:30	14:35	
YH 829	5	12:30	15:35	
K7 622	1,3,5,7	13:00	15:55	
YH 826	3	14:00	16:40	

NAY PYI TAW TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
FMI A2	1,2,3,4,5	8:35	9:35	
FMI B2	1,2,3,4,5	13:30	14:30	
FMI C2	1,2,3,4,5	18:20	19:20	

MANDALAY TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 621	Daily	6:00	8:05	
7Y 611	Daily	6:30	7:55	
YH 910	1,2,5	7:40	9:45	
Y5 233	Daily	8:05	9:15	
K7 282	Daily	8:25	11:30	
YH 918	2,4,5,6,7	8:30	10:45	
6T 402	Daily	8:45	10:50	
YH 918	3	9:10	11:05	
YH 634	7	10:00	11:25	
K7 267	Daily	10:20	12:25	
7Y 132	Daily	10:30	12:25	
YH 832	6	13:50	15:15	
YH 832	4	14:50	16:25	
YH 836	1	15:45	17:10	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	16:10	18:15	
YH 728	1	16:45	18:10	
7Y 241	2,5,7	16:40	18:45	
K7 225/7Y 242	Daily	16:50	19:00	
YH 912	2	17:00	18:55	
YH 830	5	17:00	18:25	
YH 738	5,7	17:05	19:00	
K7 823	2,4,7	17:10	18:35	
YH 732	1,2,3,4,5,7	17:10	19:15	
K7 227	2,4,6	17:20	18:45	
YH 738	3	17:25	18:50	
K7 623	1,3,5,7	17:40	19:05	
YH 836	7	17:50	19:15	
YH 738	7	17:55	19:20	
YH 730	2,4,6	18:00	19:25	
Y5 776	Daily	19:35	20:45	

NYAUNG U TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 622	Daily	6:45	8:05	
YH 918	2,4,5,6,7	7:45	10:45	
6T 401	Daily	7:55	10:50	
YH 910	3	8:05	10:10	
YH 918	1	8:05	10:10	
YH 910	1,2,5	8:25	9:45	
YH 918	3	8:25	11:05	
YH 910	7	8:35	9:55	
YH 910	4	8:35	10:40	
YH 634	5	8:35	10:40	
K7 242	Daily	8:35	11:45	
YH 910	6	9:40	11:00	
7Y 132	Daily	9:45	12:25	
7Y 431	1,3,4,6	9:55	12:55	
7Y 121	2,5,7	9:55	12:00	
K7 283	Daily	10:10	11:30	
7Y 242	1,3,4,6	16:55	18:15	
7Y 242	2,5,7	17:25	18:45	
K7 225/7Y 242	Daily	17:40	19:00	
YH 732	6	17:50	19:10	
YH 732	1,2,3,4,5,7	17:55	19:15	

MYITKYINA TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 832	6	12:25	15:15	
YH 832	4	13:25	16:25	
YH 836	1	14:20	17:10	
YH 830	5	15:35	18:25	
K7 623	1,3,5,7	16:10	19:05	
YH 836	7	16:25	19:15	
YH 827	3	16:40	19:05	

YANGON TO HEHO				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
K7 282	Daily	6:00	9:00	
YH 917	3	6:00	9:55	
YH 917	2,4,5,6,7	6:10	9:35	
YH 909	6	6:15	8:45	
6T 401	Daily	6:20	9:20	
YH 917	1	6:30	9:00	
YH 909	3	6:30	9:00	
YH 633	7	7:00	9:15	
YH 909	4	7:00	9:30	
YH 633	5	7:00	9:30	
K7 242	Daily	7:00	9:15	
K7 266	Daily	8:00	9:15	
7Y 131	Daily	8:10	11:00	
7Y 431	1,3,4,6	8:20	10:35	
7Y 121	2,5,7	8:20	10:35	
YH 505	1,2,3,5	10:30	11:55	
YH 505	4	11:00	12:25	
YH 727	1	11:15	12:40	
YH 737	5,7	11:15	12:40	
YH 737	3	11:30	12:55	
YH 505	6	11:30	12:55	
YH 911	2	12:30	17:45	
K7 828	1,3,5	12:30	13:45	
K7 822	2,4,7	12:30	13:45	
7Y 941	1,3,4,6	12:40	14:50	
7Y 943	2,5,7	12:40	14:50	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	14:00	15:10	
7Y 241	2,5,7	14:30	15:40	
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	14:30	15:45	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,5,7	15:00	16:25	
YH 731	6	15:30	16:55	

YANGON TO MYEIK				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 633	3,7	7:00	9:15	
K7 319/7Y 531	1,3,5,7	7:00	9:05	
K7 319/7Y 531	2,4,6	11:45	13:50	

YANGON TO SITTWE				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
6T 605	Daily	11:15	13:10	
K7 422	Daily	13:00	14:55	

YANGON TO THANDWE				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
K7 242	Daily	7:00	10:35	
7Y 431	1,3,4,6	8:20	11:50	
YH 505	1,2,3,5	10:30	13:10	
YH 505	4	11:00	13:40	
YH 505	6	11:30	14:10	
6T 605	Daily	11:15	12:10	
7Y 411	2,5,7	12:15	13:05	
K7 422	Daily	13:00	13:35	

YANGON TO DAWEI				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 633	2	6:30	7:55	
YH 633	3	7:00	8:25	
K7 319/7Y 531	1,3,5,7	7:00	8:10	
K7 319/7Y 531	2,4,6	11:45	12:50	

YANGON TO LASHIO				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 729	2,4,6	11:15	13:15	
K7 828	1,3,5	12:30	14:50	

YANGON TO PUTAO				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 835	1	7:00	10:35	
YH 831	6	7:00	11:30	
YH 835	7	11:30	15:30	

YANGON TO CHIANG MAI				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
W9 9607/YJ 7607	4,7	14:20	16:10	

HEHO TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 910	6	8:45	11:00	
YH 910	3	9:00	10:10	
YH 918	1	9:00	10:10	
YH 634	7	9:15	11:15	
K7 283	Daily	9:15	11:30	
K7 243	Daily	9:30	11:45	
YH 910	4	9:30	10:40	
YH 634	5	9:30	10:40	
YH 918	2,4,5,6,7	9:35	10:45	
6T 402	Daily	9:35	10:50	
YH 918	3	9:55	11:05	
7Y 132	1,3,4,6,7	10:35	13:55	
7Y 122	2,5,7	10:50	12:00	
7Y 432	1,3,4,6	10:50	12:55	
K7 267	Daily	11:10	12:25	
YH 506	1,2,3,5	11:55	14:00	
YH 506	4	12:25	14:30	
YH 506	6	12:55	15:00	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	15:25	18:15	
7Y 241	2,5,7	15:55	18:45	
YH 728	1	16:00	18:10	
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	16:00	19:00	
K7 829	1,3,5	16:10	17:25	
K7 823	2,4,7	16:20	18:35	
YH 732	1,2,3,4,5,7	16:25	19:15	
YH 738	7	16:40	18:50	
YH 738	3	16:55	19:05	
YH 732	6	16:55	19:10	
YH 738	5	17:35	18:45	
YH 912	2	17:45	18:55	

MYEIK TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 634	3,7	11:25	13:25	
K7 320/7Y 532	1,3,5,7	11:30	13:35	
K7 320/7Y 531	2,4,6	16:05	18:10	

SITTWE TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
6T 606	Daily	13:30	14:50	
K7 423	Daily	15:10	16:30	

THANDWE TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
K7 243	Daily	10:50	11:45	
7Y 432	1,3,4,6	12:05	12:55	
6T 605	Daily	12:25	14:50	
YH 506	1,2,3,5	13:10	14:00	
7Y 412	2,5,7	13:20	14:10	
YH 506	4	13:40	14:30	
YH 506	6	14:10	15:00	
K7 423	Daily	14:10	16:30	

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

THE MIDDLE By Robert W. Walls

ACROSS

- 1 Approach
- 5 Abbr. at the end of a list
- 9 Absolute bedlam
- 14 Unlock
- 15 Plum type
- 16 Cause of a red face?
- 17 Facing up to expected hardship
- 20 Gain in the polls
- 21 Duffer's dream
- 22 "Beware the ___ of March!"
- 23 Brief period of time
- 26 Terrycloth term
- 28 French farewell
- 30 Fertilizer compound
- 34 Venomous snake
- 37 With a discount of
- 39 Alternative to "window"
- 40 Prepares for sailing
- 44 More than what's needed
- 45 Forms by carving
- 46 Thumbs-up vote
- 47 Connectors of stories
- 49 Marsh growth
- 52 Unwrap fruit
- 54 Showered?
- 57 Bit of smoke
- 60 Like FDR's deal
- 62 Hindu attire
- 64 Rise to pre-eminence
- 68 Plight light
- 69 "Out with it!"
- 70 Periphery
- 71 Not relaxed
- 72 Gathering clouds, for one
- 73 What some students write on

DOWN

- 1 Corn holders
- 2 Narcotic from a poppy
- 3 Bygone Geo model
- 4 It's puzzling
- 5 Coop ovoid

- 6 What Tweety "tawt" he "taw"
- 7 Title for a big Turk (Var.)
- 8 Aquatic worm
- 9 Fine-wine-producing vineyard
- 10 Kind of medicine
- 11 "___ Lang Syne"
- 12 S-shaped molding
- 13 Places for props
- 18 Financial aid basis
- 19 Dinner interruption, '90s-style
- 24 Musician Lofgren
- 25 Choppers, so to speak
- 27 Bay in the stable
- 29 "Bride or groom?" asker
- 31 Pale
- 32 ___ gin fizz
- 33 First lady on Mount Olympus
- 34 Creates wonderment
- 35 Canonical hour
- 36 Bread for a gyro
- 38 Rat residence
- 41 Tongs, e.g.
- 42 Relative of a rabbit
- 43 On the briny
- 48 Fax button
- 50 Piece of dinnerware
- 51 Caught, in a way
- 53 Send packing
- 55 Destroy gradually
- 56 Chrome blemishes
- 57 Drift, as an aroma
- 58 Part of an archipelago
- 59 Examine in detail
- 61 Fanciful notion
- 63 Run for, as public office
- 65 Born as, for women
- 66 First family member
- 67 "___ Little Indians"

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20								21				22		
	23				24	25		26		27				
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71						72					73			

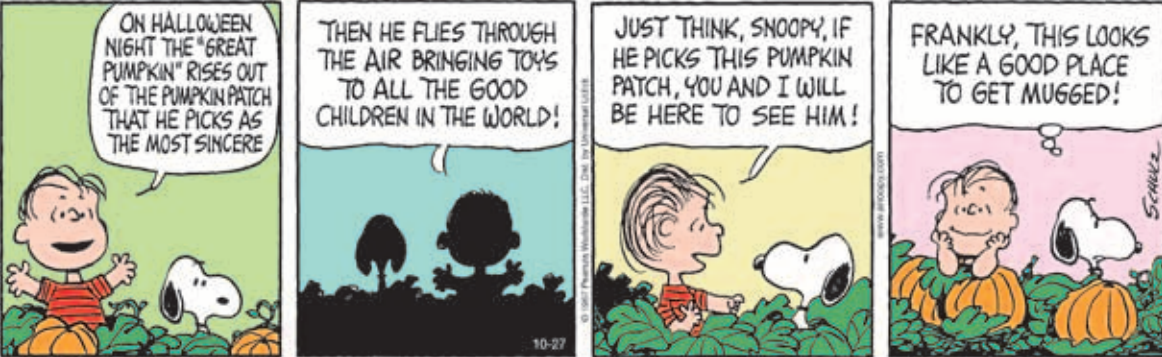
DILBERT

BY SCOTT ADAMS



PEANUTS

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CALVIN AND HOBBS

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SUDOKU PACIFIC

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

	1			8	9			
		5						8
4	9			5		7		1
				2	4			
3		2				5		7
			6	7				
8		7		6			1	5
5						3		
			5	4			9	

10/30

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BROWN BAGGIN' IT

Solution: 9 letters

E	I	H	S	E	R	F	C	R	E	A	T	I	V	E
R	D	E	L	D	A	Y	S	F	E	T	B	A	G	S
A	E	A	C	E	L	T	A	A	S	C	A	R	E	K
P	A	L	M	O	G	S	G	A	N	K	I	T	S	C
E	S	T	O	E	N	A	O	S	F	D	S	P	R	A
R	H	H	A	O	M	T	B	F	P	A	W	A	E	N
P	C	Y	P	T	P	O	A	O	F	A	O	I	L	S
S	N	L	P	O	N	T	H	I	Y	R	R	A	C	T
D	U	E	L	S	S	E	I	L	N	O	K	W	O	H
A	L	V	E	P	D	C	I	O	A	E	J	E	L	P
L	R	A	A	I	W	I	E	C	N	E	R	N	D	A
A	S	R	S	D	A	I	L	Y	I	S	M	S	E	C
S	O	T	Y	S	T	E	C	I	F	F	O	O	D	K
Q	U	I	C	K	E	L	P	M	I	S	F	R	E	E
O	P	L	A	N	R	R	E	V	O	T	F	E	L	D

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10/27

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5	1	4	3	9	6	7	2	8
3	2	1	5	7	9	4	8	6
7	4	5	8	6	1	2	9	3
6	8	9	4	2	3	1	5	7
1	3	7	9	5	2	8	6	4
8	9	6	1	3	4	5	7	2
4	5	2	6	8	7	3	1	9

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Tel : (951) 391070, 391071. Reservation@391070 (Ext) 1910, 106.
Fax : (951) 391375. Email : hotelasiaplaza@gmail.com

Avenue 64 Hotel
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No. 12, Pho Sein Road, Tamwe Township, Yangon Tel : (95-1) 209299, 209300, 209343 Fax : (95-1) 209344 bestwestern.com/ greenhillhotelyangon.com

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No.7A, Wingabar Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. Tel : (951) 546313, 430245. 09-731-77781-4. Fax : (01) 546313. www.cloverhotel.asia. info@cloverhotel.asia

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Clover Hotel City Center Plus
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Confort Inn
4, Shweli Rd, Bet: Inya Rd & U Wisara Rd, Kamaryut, tel: 525781, 526872


No. (356/366), Kyaikkasan Rd, Tamwe Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Ph: 542826, Fax: 545650 Email: reservation@ edenpalacehotel.com


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(21st Downtown)
66-70, 21st Street (Enter from Strand Rd), Latha Tsp, Yangon. Tel: (95-1) 378201

(Ahlone Branch)
35, Min Ye Kyaw Swar Rd, Ahlone Tsp, Yangon. Tel: (95-1) 218061-64; Email: grandunited. head@gmail.com, www. hotelgrandunited.com

Hotel Yangon
91/93, 8th Mile Junction, Tel : 01-667708, 667688.


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Inya Lake Resort Hotel
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KH Hotel, Yangon
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Strand Hotel
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Sule Shangri-La Hotel
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Windsor Hotel No.31, Shin Saw Pu Street, Sanchaung, Yangon, Myanmar. Ph: 95-1-511216-8, www. hotelwindsoryangon.com

Winner Inn
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Yuzana Hotel
130, Shwegondaing Rd, Bahan Tsp, tel : 01-549600

Yuzana Garden Hotel
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Sakura Residence
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Department of Post & Telecommunication ☎tel: 591384, 591387.
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs ☎tel: 067-412009, 067-412344.
Ministry of Health ☎tel: 067-411358-9.
Yangon City Development Committee ☎tel: 248112.

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Yangon Children Hospital ☎tel: 222807, 222808, 222809.
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I'M AN experienced Chinese (Mandarin) teacher here in Yangon, Myanmar. I have over 6 years teaching in Singapore. Please do not hesitate to contact me for an evaluation. I'm a professional teacher who will help you improve your speaking, reading and writing skills. I use Singaporean text books and Chinese speaking/conversation books for teaching speaking, reading and writing in Mandarin. I'm available Monday-Sunday with a flexible schedule. I also teach Myanmar language to all Foreigners. For more details please call the number below. If I don't answer please send me a SMS and I will get back to you as soon as possible. May: 095-9-516-2988.

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TEACHING Myanmar language for foreigners Near Myay Ni Gone City Mart, Sanchaung. Ph: 09-4200-30782.

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ROYAL JOURNEYS, Learn English for life : How to make English part of your lifestyle, English communication skills, Business English, Hospitality & tourism Management, Management & leadership & superior training. 61, 1A Flr, 13 St, Bet : Anawrahta Rd & Mahabandoola Rd, Landmadaw tsp. Ph: 09-4316-6443.

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SWAN SAUNG YEE Travel & Tours Co., Ltd. Bldg (D/B), Rm (002), Thitsar Residence, South Okkalapa, Yangon. Kyaik Hti Yoe (1N/2D)-80,000/-ks per pax. Chaung Tha (2N/3D)-93,000/-ks per pax. Bagan-Popa (3N/4D)-138,900/-ks per pax. Mandalay-Saigaing-Innwa-(3N/4D)-156,000/-ks per pax. Ph: 01-562917, 09-8611-864

TAXI, Service Near, Parkroyal Hotel, Air Conditioner Car, English Speaking Driver, One hour 5000 kyats, 09-317-75734.

Public Notices

AMDA Myanmar Country Office moved to a new location on 7th October, 2014. The new office address: (1) New Office Address: AMDA Myanmar Country Office : 73/A (1), University Avenue Road, Golden valley (1), Bahan Tsp, Yangon, Myanmar. Ph : 513224.

TRAINED Domestic Helper available. Knowledge of all household works, including infants and elderly people care. Tel: 09-315-75765, 09-2506-49927.

MITA Myanmar Investment, Trade & Technology Conference, Workshop and Exhibition will be held during 25-27 Sept 2014 UMFCCI, Yangon. The Best Conference, Exhibition & Workshop @ Reasonable Fees in Myanmar! for more info, please visit: www.MitaMyanmarInvestmentTechnologyConference.com, Ph: 09420110451, 09-4201-10666, Email: maizar@mitaservices.com.sg

Property

Housing for Rent

CONDO: Dagon Tsp, Near Parkroyal Hotel, 2050 Sqft, 3 bed room with Toilet, bath tub, hot water available, 5AC, Lift, Fully furnished (2250 USD) per month, Please contact: 09-2500-26350.

MAYNIGONE, Sanchaung, Min St, First Flr, all furniture, one bed room, one kitchen, one bathroom, (The balcony) 1RC, 1(month) 600US, Shan Shan Ph: 09-731-92603, Moe Hein Ph: 09-4250-18442

KAMARYUT, Bayint Naung Tower, 1500 sqft, 1 MBR & 2 SBR. Fully furnished. 12 lakhs. Negotiable. Contact: phyuphyu.077@gmail.com Ph: 09-503-2952, 09-730-75900.

BAHAN, Near Chatrium Hotel, Po Sein Rd, 2RC, house, 3 Rooms with Toilet, 3AC, 2 Cable Phones, wide car parking, (USD 2500) per month, Ph: 09-2500-26350.

DAGON, Near Parkroyal Hotel, 1250 Sqft, One bed room with Toilet, one single bed room with balcony, 3AC, 1 cable phone, Lift, internet, Fully Furnished, (1200 USD) per month, Ph: 09-2500-26350.

(1). Pansodan Tower, 1800sqft, 2 Rooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 lifts (2). Mingalardon industry zone, 2-Acre, 100'x100', 2 story, 80'x80', Store Ph: 09-731-54071, 01-530-756.

YANKIN, Thit Sar St, Ground Flr, 25'x50', included Garden, Higher prepair finished, Ph: 09-2510-27176.

(1). **PANSODAN** Condo, 1800sqft, 2 Rooms, 2 Hall, with 2lifts, 2 bath rooms (2). 2RC, Near the Diamond, Kamaryut (3). Mingalardon industry zone, factory 2RC, 100'x100', 80'x80'. Ph: 09-731-54071, 01-530-756.

BAHAN, Inya Rd House, 2 RC, Area 3008 sqft, 3MBR, 2SR, 1 living, 1 dinning, 1 praying, 1 kitchen, 1 common toilet, 1 car garage, 2 store room, 1 ph line, AC 6, water heater 5, Internet line, All bedroom are bathroom attached. Price 3000 USD, quite and power save place. Near by Inyahotel. Ph: 09-512-6285, 09-731-74306.

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BAHAN, University Rd, University Yeik Mon

Condo, Condo(B), 3BR, 1 living room, 1 kitchen room, ph line. 20 lakhs. Ph: 09-512-6285, 09-731-74306.

HLAING, Shwehinthar condo, (1) Tower C1, 2200sqft, 2MBR, 2SR, 6AC, 2 lift, basement car park, generator, fully furnished, USD 5000/month. (2) Tower B, 2200sqft, 1MBR, 2SR, 5AC, 2lift, basement car park, generator, fully furnished, USD 5000/month. (3) Tower C2, 2220sqft, 2MBR, 2SR, 6AC, 2lift, basement car park, generator, fully furnished, USD 6000/month. Ph: 09-4210-21621, 09-2540-01189.

OFFICE SUITES for Lease, Pearl Centre, Bahan Township, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, 500-10,000 sq-ft available at affordable rates. Contact: 09 430 30 288 slee888@gmail.com

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INSEIN, Sawbaugyigone, 45,000 sqft. Two storey building with landline phone. contact: phyuphyu.077@gmail.com Ph: 09-503-2952, 09-730-75900.

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SPEAKING Burmese for foreigners : In-home tutoring email: burmese.tutor2014@gmail.com

foreigners. If you want to contact, call me, Katherine Ph: 09-516-8697.

REGISTERED Tourist guide in English, French is available for immediate appointment, please ring 09-3019-9028.

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COLD STORAGE 100 M/T capacity situated at Hlaing Thar Yar Industrial area at reasonable rate. Please Contact: 682011, 685846, 09-500-8845, 09-500-8843.

For Sale

SAMSUNG Galaxy SII, GT-I9100T (14GB, Black) No Error + 2 Cover. Price : 110,000 Kyats. Ph: 09-2500-80324.

SAMSUNG GALAXY Tablet 7.7. With phone, 3G. Similar to current Samsung Note 8, which costs usd 380. Two years old. Price usd 150 or offer. Phone 10 AM, Mr Ansar, Rm 503, Ph: 01-246030, 242094.



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Expert knowledge of IT, business and marketing terminology essential for the IT, business and advertising translation specialist. A minimum of 5 years translation experience. Strong computer skills, including Burmese touch typing. Translators of other languages must be able to touch type in those languages. Must be capable of working independently and showing a high level of initiative. University degree. Must be details oriented. Desire to learn.

To apply, send a CV and cover letter to hr@linguamyanmar.com
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Employment

UN Position

THE UNITED Nations World Food Programme is seeking (1) **Program me Officer** (Head of Area Office) NO-C, Lashio <Shan State> please visit to <http://www.themimu.info/jobs-for-myanmar-nationals>. Please Email the applications with UN P-11 to wfpmyanmar.vacancy@wfp.org <<mailto:wfpmyanmar.vacancy@wfp.org>> COB 31 October 2014.

Embassy Position

ROYAL EMBASSY of Cambodia is seeking **Secretary** 1 post. Interested persons should send an application letter with a current CV, 2ID photos, recommendation letters and educational certificate copies. 25 (3B/4B) New University Avenue, Bahan, Yangon. Ph: 951-549-609, 540-964. Email: camemb.mmr@mfa.gov.kh

Ingo Position

(1) **DEPUTY MANAGER** (Finance & Admin) - 1 Post (2) **CSR Program Officer** 1 Post (3) **Admin Assistant** (Malaria) - 1 Post (4) **Engineer** - 2 Posts (Consultant for Renovation Health Facilities Assessment) (5) **Site Engineer** (Sun Rural Health Centre) - 2 Posts. Please send application letter, CV & related documents to Myanmar Red Cross Society (Head Office) Yazatingaha Rd, Dekkhinathiri, Nay Pyi Taw. Ormrshrrecruitment@gmail.com www.myanmarredcrosssociety.org

MYANMAR Red Cross Society is seeking (1) **Monitoring & Evaluation Officer** 1 post in Nay Pyi Taw: Myanmar National. University Degree or advanced education. 2 years of experience in child protection field. Effective both Myanmar and English language skills. Effective Computer knowledge. (2) **WASH/ Watsan Specialist** 1 post in Matupi, Mogok, Falam: Relevant university degree in one the following areas: Civil Engineering, Geology, Hydrology, or related fields. 2 years experience in community-based programmes with the objective to improve access to safe water; designing, implementing & monitoring of activities with a focus on rehabilitation and/or construction of gravity flow water systems. Excellent command of English. Computer skills, including competency in use of Microsoft Office, Excel & internet navigation. Competency in use of AutoCAD & EPANET is an asset. Please submit consultancy proposals. Red Cross Volunteers are preferable. Please send application letter, CV & related documents to Myanmar Red Cross Society Head Office. Yazathingaha Rd, Dekkhinathiri, Nay Pyi Taw. Or mrshrrecruitment@gmail.com Closing date: 28-10-2014.

PACT GLOBAL Microfinance Fund is seeking **Human Resources Officer** - 1 post, Duty Station: PGMF, Yangon, Duration: 12 months full time initially (including three months-probation) University degree, Bachelor's Degree or equivalent in HR or related field. 3 years of experience. Ability to coordinate team & provide supervision & mentoring to multiple staff. Sound analytical & problem solving skills. Strong organizational

skills & ability to prioritize multiple tasks. Proficiency with PC based software- Word & Excel. Demonstrated ability in oral and written English communications skills in order to effectively present detailed information & respond to questions in a professional manner. Willingness to learn or adapt to new ideas and procedures. Myanmar national. Please submit application letter & detail CV with relevant supporting documents, a recently taken photo, contact details & 2 referees to HR Manager, Pact Global Microfinance Fund: 497, 1st Flr, Tower B, Diamond Condominium, Payay Rd, Kamaryut, Yangon. Ph: 501373, 501379. Email: teihtwe@pactworld.org Closing date : 29th October, 2014

THE INT'L Rescue Committee (IRC) is seeking (1) **Supply Chain Assistant** - 1 post in Yangon: University Degree or Diploma in related field and/ or related training course. Prior work experience in logistics & procurement. Computer literate with strong MS office. Good communication in both Burmese and English. Please submit a Cover letter & CV to the HR Department by email at: WaiMar.Naing@rescue.org or by delivery to : 33/A, Natmawk Lane Thwe (1), Bocho (2) Quarter, Bahan, Yangon. Closing date : 28th October, 2014.

(1) **M & E Officer** (Child Protection) 1 Post (2) **Logistics Assistant** (Mindat/Matupi) 2 Posts (3) **WASH / Watsan Specialist** 1 Post. (4) **Program Officer** (CBHFA) 1 Post. Please send application letter, CV & related documents to Myanmar Red Cross Society (Head Office) Yazatingaha Rd, Dekkhinathiri, Nay Pyi Taw. Ormrshrrecruitment@gmail.com www.myanmarredcrosssociety.org

CLINTON Health Access Initiative is seeking **Junior Office Assistant**, who will be based in Nay Pyi Taw: Fluency in Burmese both written & oral. Familiarity with the set up of offices in DoH and MoH. Can reside in Nay Pyi Taw with own arrangement. Can drive in Nay Pyi Taw. Interested candidates are invited to submit CV with a cover letter (in English) by the 31st of October 2014. Please address your application to: xchan@clintonhealthaccess.org

Local Positions

ANANDA TRAVEL is seeking for **Sales Operator** - 3 posts: Fluent in Franch language (4 skills), Computer knowledge (word, excel, internet & email), Can apply this post (local or foreigner), Must have two years experience at least. with attractive salary. Please submit CV with necessary documents to 106-B, Anandathuria St, Saw Bwa Gyi Gone Quarter, Insein. Ph: 09-431-60501, 09-425-328182.

INLE LAKE VIEW Resort Hotel & The LOFT Hotel (Yangon) is seeking (1) **F&B Manager** - 3 Posts : 5 ~ 8 years' experience. (2) **F&B Supervisor** - 5 Posts : 3 ~ 5 years experience. (3) **F&B Captain** - 5 Posts : 2 ~ 3 years experience. (4) **Waiter / Waitress** - 15 Posts : 2 ~ 3 years experience. Please submit CV, Photo with necessary documents to Rm 404, 4th Flr, Royal Yaw Min Gyi Condo, No 52,

Yaw Min Gyi St, Dagon tsp. Ph: 01-393112, 393113. email: project.inlelakeview@gmail.com

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT 1 post : B.Com, ACCA, LCCI, 3 years experience. Ph: 09-516-9526.

EVER Flow River, Group of Companies (Public) Limited is seeking (1) **Marine Surveyor** : A University Degree in related field. 2 years of relevant experience in the marine surveying industry. Strong marine background, excellent communication & writing skills. Ability to communicate at all levels, good English writing skills necessary. Possess driving license & own vehicle. (2) **Loss Adjusters** (Motor & Non-Motor): A University Degree in Engineering (Civil), Engineering (Mechanical), Law or other relevant disciplines. Ability to communicate at all levels, good English writing skills necessary. Possess driving license and own vehicle. Please

send updated CV with salary expectation & recent photo to info@ajaxadjusters.com & thetlinoo77@gmail.com or Thet Lin Oo (Administration Manager) E.F.R Group of Companies (Public) Limited: Rm 6, 4th Flr, United Condo Tower 1, 39, Ahlanpya Pagoda Rd, Dagon Tsp, Yangon. **STRATEGY** Partner is looking for (1) **Cashier cum Junior Accountant** : who love numbers & has analytical thinking to handle cash transactions. Willing to learn new things and love challenges, love to work with team. Strategy Partner is newly founded as accounting firm and providing accounting service, HR and recruitment service to SME and Branch of International company. (2) **Office Secretary** : For all posts preferably 1 to 2 years of relevant experience in similar position. Very good communication skills in English & good computer

literacy. Able to work with team, multitasking and work under pressure with minimum supervision. Willing to learn new things & love challenges. Excellent interpersonal skills. Office hour - 9 am to 5 pm (Only weekdays). Please send an application including CV with expected salary to wai.strategypartner@gmail.com or No.(17), Shwe Tha Pyay Yeik Mon(2), Nawarat St, Tharketa, Yangon. Closing date : 31st Oct 2014.

BELMOND Governors Residence is looking for (1) **Guest Relations Officer** (2) **Guest Service Officer**. Belmond Shwe Kyet Yet Tour is looking (1) **Tour Desk Sales** (2) **Ticketing Officer** (3) **Reservation Officer** • Please submit CV with necessary documents to Ms Aye Aye Lynn (Assistant HR Manager) email : ayeaye.linn@belmond.com.

FULLERTON Myanmar is seeking (1) **Credit & Under writing**

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send C.V with a recent photo before 31st Oct 2014 to soehninphyu@fullertonmyanmar.com No.225, Thumana St, Ward (3), Thaketa, Yangon. Ph: 019190551. **GOLDEN CLOVER** Travel is looking for (1) **Tour Operation Manager** - M 1 Post: 5 years of experience in tourism field. (2) **Chief Accountant** - M/F 1 Post: 5 years of experience. (3) **Programmer** - M/F (1) Post : 5 years of experience in ICT field. For all positions: Any graduate with certificate. English language (4 skills) must be fluent. Good communication and skills social dealing. Computer literate (very good knowledge of Excel/PowerPoint/Word/Internet/Email) Please submit an application letter, CV with recent photo, Copies of NRC, Educational certificate and other testimonial to Golden Clover Travel & Tours : 48, Rm (E-3), 2nd Floor, Gyar Taw Ya Oat Rd, Shwe Nanthar

Quarter, Bahan, Yangon. Tel: +95-18603244/45, 0949297848. Email: info@goldenclover.com.mm

WE ARE seeking highly suitable candidate for the **HR Head/ HR Manager** : Bachelor's Degree or higher education in relating HR Management field. (From Foreign college or university is prefer). 5 years specialized work experience in related field in local and oversea. Proficiency in computer skills in Microsoft Word, Excel, Page maker & power point. Strong organization skills, ability to prioritize the multiple tasks & problem solving skills. English 4 skills. Age 30 ~ 40 years. Salary US\$ 1500 ~ 2000 per month. Please submit recent CV & cover letter (English) to ezytrading@mptmail.net.mm & Cc mail : sengawng86@gmail.co, smilingrebecca2011@gmail.com. Closing date: 31.10.2014. Ph: 09-4211-28700, 09-4311-9985.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT No. 029/2014

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a federal enterprise with worldwide operations. It supports the German Government in international cooperation for sustainable development and in international education work. Most of our activities are commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). GIZ operates in more than 130 countries. GIZ employs approximately 17,000 staff members worldwide, some 70 % of whom are local personnel.

Based on a Government-to-Government Agreement between Myanmar and Germany, GIZ has been present in Myanmar since 2012 and is expanding its activities in the country aiming at sustainable economic development. Currently, GIZ is particularly active in the areas of 1) private sector development, 2) technical vocational education and training, and 3) financial sector development (FSD).

The financial sector development project (FSD) aims at supporting Myanmar stakeholders in creating an inclusive and stable banking sector. The project intervenes on four main areas:

- Improving the legal framework for the banking sector;
- Strengthening financial reporting practices;
- Upscaling human capacities in the banking sector;
- Supporting pilot banks in their service provision to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Our project staff works with many different national and international institutions, including Myanmar Central Bank, Myanmar Banks Association, private and state-owned banks, national audit institutions, training providers and universities as well as international development organizations.

To support us in our activities in the financial sector development project, GIZ is seeking applications from highly motivated professional candidates for the following position:

Position: National Expert in Banking and Finance
Location: Yangon
Contract Period: 1st January 2015 – 31st December 2015 (Extendable)
Number of Positions: 1

(A) Responsibilities

The main responsibility of the National Expert in Banking and Finance is the support of the daily activities aiming at the further development of the Myanmar banking sector. Whereas at the beginning, the work would include in particular the support of the International Advisors, more responsibility will be given to independent, qualified and motivated staff members.

(B) The National Expert in Banking and Finance may perform the following tasks:

- planning, coordinating and supporting the implementation of project activities such as consultancies, trainings and other joint events for and with the Myanmar banking sector;
- maintaining and strengthening the relationships and networks with relevant stakeholders, including banks, government ministries and agencies, and international donors;
- managing and supporting the regular communication (in English and Burmese language) with the main counterparts of the project;
- preparing and coordinating the trips and missions of short and long term International Consultants and Experts;
- Potentially: providing specific technical input to the project and its partners in banking topics, matching the past theoretical and practical experiences of the selected candidate.

As we are still a small team, the work involves administrative support as well as the application of technical knowledge that will be strengthened over time.

(C) Required qualifications, competences and experience
Qualifications

The prospective candidate should:

- have a University Degree in Economics, Business Administration, Banking or other relevant field;

Professional experience

The prospective candidate should:

- have a minimum of three to five years working experience in the banking industry (national or international) or at another international organization working in a similar field;

Other knowledge, additional competences

The prospective candidate should:

- be able to work independently and goal oriented;
- have excellent communication, organizational and administration skills. Working experience in multi-cultural environments is a plus;
- be fluent in English and Myanmar language, including technical banking vocabulary;
- have very good computer skills (Microsoft Office, email, internet).
- An established network to key stakeholders in the banking sector is a strong advantage.

GIZ offers a competitive salary and a social benefits package.

Application procedure:
Applications are accepted until Saturday, 15th November 2014, 17:00Hrs

Qualified candidates shall send their application letter along with their non-returnable recent CV and contact detail of two referees to the following address:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
No. 45, Inya Myaing Road, Golden Valley (2) Ward, Bahan Township,
Yangon, Myanmar
OR
E-Mail: recruit-myanmar@giz.de

Note:
Please mark the application with: "Application for National Expert in Banking and Finance (029/14)."
Only short listed candidates will be contacted and applications are requested to be sent in Microsoft Word or PDF format.

BELGRADE

Drone stunt leads to brawl between Serbia and Albania

BOTH Serbia and Albania are hoping for a favourable ruling from UEFA when European football's governing body meets to discuss the violence that halted the Balkan rivals' Euro 2016 qualifier two weeks ago.

Both countries blame each other for the trouble at the match which then escalated into an unprecedented political crisis.

Serbia could be held responsible for several issues linked with the organisation of the October 14 game, notably since Serbian fans invaded the pitch to attack Albanian players in Belgrade on October 14.

On the other hand, Albania should answer for its refusal to continue playing the match despite, as Serbia's Football Federation (FSS) claims, a UEFA recommendation to do it as well as for deployment of an illegal flag.

For FSS the violence was provoked by a drone that carried a flag with the map of a 'Greater Albania', a nationalist project aimed at gathering all Albanian communities in the Balkans in one state.

"To display a 'Greater Albania' map in Belgrade is equivalent to displaying Hitler's portrait to Jews," commented Zeljko Petrovic, an assistant to Serbia's Dutch coach Dick Advocaat, explaining the fury of the public in Belgrade.



A fan cheers in front of the Greater Albania flag. Photo: AFP

For Belgrade the incident was a "planned political provocation" aimed at interrupting the game.

FSS wants the Euro qualifier to be registered as a 3-0 victory for Serbia and said it would not comment on the issue before the UEFA announces its decision.

Meanwhile, the Albanian Football Association called for a "full and independent investigation into incidents that occurred before, during and after the match" abandoned in the 41st minute with the score at 0-0.

Albanian FA said that their squad's bus was pelted with stones while heading to the Partizan stadium.

A chunk of concrete, stones, coins and lighters were hurled at Albania's players and officials before and during the match, it said.

Albanian FA also claimed that when the violence escalated, their players were beaten with fists as well as with chains and stressed that Serbia fans chanted "Death to Albanians!" and "Kill Albanians!"

"Albania's team did not refuse to

continue the game, it is the extreme violence ... of Serbian fans that made it impossible to play the match," the Albanian FA lawyer Artan Hajdari told AFP.

No representatives from the two federations were expected at the hearing of UEFA's disciplinary committee and no announcement of any punishment would be made before October 24.

Meanwhile, two week after the incident, there was still no official explanation about the appearance of the drone over the stadium.

Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic only said that an investigation into the incident was advancing.

Serbian authorities will present "uncontestable facts" on the incident as well as on its "very serious planning aimed at humiliating Serbia and provoking unrest", he said.

On the night of the match, Belgrade accused the brother of Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama of controlling the drone from his seat in the stadium's executive box.

But Olsi Rama, who later returned to Tirana with the Albanian team to a hero's welcome, denied the claims.

The violence was followed by an outbreak of nationalist tensions.

Hooligans attacked several ethnic-Albanian-owned shops in Serbia, notably in the northern town of Novi Sad. A Molotov cocktail was thrown into one

'To display a 'Greater Albania' map in Belgrade is equivalent to displaying Hitler's portrait to Jews.'

Zeljko Petrovic
Assistant coach for Serbia

bakery, while several others had their windows broken, local media reported.

In Tirana, on social networks a call for a protest was launched to ask from UEFA "not to tolerate racism, Albanophobia and xenophobia" of the Serbian side.

The incident aggravated political crisis and Rama's historic visit to Belgrade, the first of an Albanian prime minister in 68 years, that was originally scheduled for October 22, was eventually postponed to November 10.

Serbs and Albanians in the region maintain ever hostile relations due to historical and recent disputes like Kosovo, the former Serbian province mostly populated by Albanians, unilaterally declared independence in 2008.

- AFP

BERLIN

German strongman dead at 63

Gerb Bonk struggled with health issues for decades due to state-mandated doping

TWO-TIME East German Olympic weightlifting medalist and former world recordholder Gerd Bonk, who later blamed the communist regime's sports doping programme for damaging his organs, has passed away at the age of 63.

According to Germany's Help for the Victims of Doping group (DOH), Bonk died on October 20 having collapsed and fallen into a coma at the end of September due to severe organ damage, caused by the drugs he took.

Bonk won a bronze medal at the 1972 Olympic games in Munich, then took silver in the same weight category four years later at the Montreal games.

The giant German also took a silver in the 1975 world championships in Moscow and set two former world

Kilograms

252

Gerb Bonk's lifting record

records in his career having managed to lift 252.5 kilograms.

But Bonk, from Greiz, Thuringia, was one of around 200 state-approved athletes documented on the GDR regime's doping programme and was given the performance-enhancing steroid Oral-Turinabol for years.

He won 31 medals in international competition.

"A doctor came in and said, 'if you don't take it, you're off the team tomorrow', he once told the *Sued-deutsche Zeitung* explaining how he started doping.

Bonk was assured the drugs had few side effects: "Your beard will grow a bit, but nothing more will happen."

The trained car mechanic was later forced to retire, aged just 37, due to the effects of doping on his health and given a disability pension.

"GDR sport has ruined my body," said Bonk, who later grew bitter about the lack of help and support in Germany for former East German athletes who were forced into the doping program.

"Burned by the GDR, forgotten by united Germany," he wrote. - AFP

ZAGREB

Croatian boxer attacks referee, suspended for life

CROATIAN boxer Vido Loncar was suspended for life by the national boxing federation on October 21 after he knocked down a referee at the European youth championship here unsatisfied after losing the match.

Loncar was "suspended from boxing for life" over his "brutal attack on an official", a federation statement said after an emergency session of its executive committee over the incident.

The savage attack against the referee occurred on October 20 as Loncar, apparently unhappy with the referee's decision to halt the match before proclaiming the victory of his rival, brutally attacked him.

Loncar knocked down Polish referee Magej Dziurgot and hit him several times before he was dragged by his ankles out from the ring.

He was boxing against Lithuanian Algirdas Baniulis who fled the ring when Loncar attacked the referee.

The footage of the attack was posted on the internet.

The Croatian federation apologised to both the World Boxing Organisation, the European Boxing Organisation and all other relevant boxing bodies for the "damage Loncar caused by his act". It also deeply apologised to the family of the referee, who was hospitalised.

"This is the worst thing which could have happened, a big shame for Zagreb and Croatia," the federation's secretary general Marko Marovic said quoted by the state-run HRT television.

"All the efforts that we have put into organisation of this championship and boosting of the image of Croatia's boxing was destroyed in a few seconds."

The European Youth Championship is taking place in the Croatian capital from October 17 to 26. - AFP

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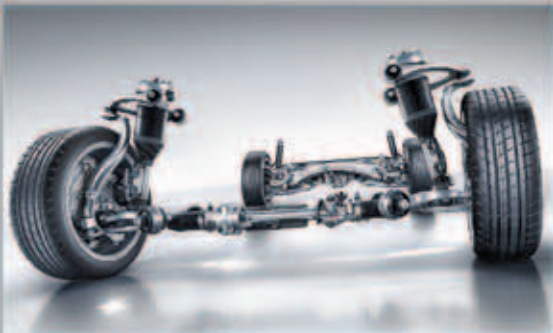
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Sport

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SPORT 66

KUALA LUMPUR

Badminton champ fails drug test, fans shocked

Malaysian icon will reportedly seek further tests to prove innocence

MALAYSIANS expressed shock and disbelief on October 22 after reports claimed national icon and badminton world number one Lee Chong Wei had failed a drugs test.

"Still hope this is not true... Whatever the outcome, we still with you!" one user posted on Twitter.

"Oh no, say it isn't so!" another wrote among numerous comments posted on social media sites.

Malaysia's Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin confirmed late on October 21 that an athlete had tested positive for a banned substance but refused to name the athlete.

However Malaysia's Star newspaper and other media reported that Lee had failed a random test at the World Badminton Championships in Denmark in late August.

"We had informed the athlete concerned who was shocked by the news," Khairy was quoted by the national news agency Bernama as saying.

Khairy added in a statement that the athlete had applied for a further test to be conducted and was waiting to hear from international sports authorities on the test date.

Khairy said he had asked top sports officials to probe all the medicine and treatment the athlete had received after Malaysia's anti-doping agency was informed of the failed test in an October 1.

"Athletes cannot blame the coaches or medical specialists but themselves. We take this matter seriously ... We have zero tolerance for athletes involved in doping," he said, according to Bernama.



Lee Chong Wei competes at the World Badminton Championships in Denmark in August. Photo: AFP

The Badminton World Federation declined to comment, saying its anti-doping regulations required confidentiality.

Neither Khairy nor Lee could be reached for comment.

Lee, a star in the Southeast Asian nation, has consistently topped the badminton rankings despite having

failed to win a world or Olympic title. In Copenhagen, Lee lost to China's Chen Long in the final.

Lee had posted a photo with his wife and his young son on Twitter earlier last week, saying "Birthday celebration with my beloved family and close friends last night".

The doping allegations are the

second involving Malaysian athletes recently.

Earlier this month, the head of the Wushu Federation of Malaysia resigned to take responsibility after Asian Games champion Tai Chau Xuen tested positive for doping and was stripped of her gold medal.

— AFP

Yangon boxers to face international challengers

KYAW ZIN HLAING

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A SEVEN-NATION feast of Myanmar traditional boxing kicks off on November 2 at Yangon's Theinphyu indoor stadium, pitting some of the world's top pugilists against each other.

The main event features Myanmar Champion Tun Tun Min, who faces 2014 Thai fight champion Tuhtaboev from Uzbekistan, while the 2013 SEA Games gold medallist Too Too will tackle Canadian fighter Matthew, the 2013 WMC champion.

Other matches include Myanmar fighters Tha Pyay Nyo, Kyar Pouk, Saw El Lay and Ye Myat Aung, who face Narongchai Munwiangch of Thailand, Rafael Da Silva from Brazil, Batbayar of Mongolia, and Jonel Pasquin Borbon and Viron T from the Philippines respectively.

"This competition will be an international showcase for Myanmar traditional boxing, and it won't be the last," promised Myanmar Letwhay Association's general secretary U Waso Win Myint before a press conference.

Myanmar champion Tun Tun Min says he will beat his opponent because he is fighting in his own country. "This is my first international competition since becoming champion," he said, "I've been studying my opponent's fighting form on the internet."



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