Kyaing Tong in Transition (c. 1850-1950)

Soe Aung
Professor-Head of Department, Department of History, Kyaing Tong University

Kyaing Tong is the largest and oldest state of Trans-Than Lwin Region. It is known in history with such variety of names as Gon (Khun) (Than Tun, 2004), Kom, Kyaing Tong (Hman-nan, 2008), Khema Vara and Khema Rahta Jayajotitonkarapur (Scott and Hardiman, 1901). The first people who migrated into Kyaing Tong were Wa or La-wa. They also settled in the other areas of eastern Shan States and Lan Na in northern Thailand (Conway, 2006). There were followed by Gon (Khun) and Lu people. The date of the migration of these people is attributed to the early first millennium AD even though local chronicles mentions the date of early settlements to twelfth century AD (Mangrai, 1981). Later the ethnic group from the neighbouring states of Thailand and Laos comprising Tai Hkun; Tai Lu, Tai Lem, Tai Neu, Tai Yuan, Tai Lao and Tai Htai came to settle in the Trans-Thanlwin Region including Kyaing Tong area (Sai Aung Tun, 2009). They established communities which later developed chiefs known as saaphas or sawbwas (in Myanmar) which means lord of the sky. A legend says that Kyaing Tong was firstly founded by a hermit named Tong. The state therefore was named after its founder Keng Tong or Kyaing Tong. However Kyaing Tong chronicle mentions that the first two sawbwas of Kyaing Tong; Mang Kom and Mang Yè belonged to Wa Tribe. They were replaced by Khun sawbwas who ruled the region from the mid-thirteenth century A.D to 1959 when sawbwas relinquished their autonomous rule (Than Tun, 2004).

Like the Myanmar chronicles and other Shan chronicles, Kyaing Tong chronicles began since the life time of Buddha who visited to Kyaing Tong area and made a prophecy on the future of Kyaing Tong and left eight sacred hair relics (Mangrai, 1981). Some local people of present day Kyaing Tong still believe the origins of their state had connected to the legends. The people of Kyaing Tong still propitiate the guardian spirits primarily female dragon at their home or at the ceremonies (Sai Lon Gyi, 2014). Like Myanmar kings, successive Kyaing Tong Sawbwas consulted with the soothsayers for the establishment of Haw-palace and city as well as held the propitiation ceremony to female dragon who was believed to be the guardian spirit of Kyaing Tong.

The relations between Kyaing Tong and Myanmar kings began only in the mid-sixteenth century even though Myanmar chronicles describe that Kyaing Tong had been one of the tributary states of Myanmar since the Bagan period. The epigraphic evidence of Myanmar reveals that the hegemony of Myanmar had never been extended beyond Thanlwin River during Bagan period was dominated by Wa tribes between AD 1134 and 1229. In 1253 they were driven out by Gons or Khuns (Than Tun, 2004) and their chiefs become the independent rulers till AD 1557 when Taungoo Empire extended its influence under King Bayinnaung. It is interesting to note that the first ruler of Kyaing Tong was instilled by Mangrai of...
Chiang Mai since 1292. Thai chronicles also mention that Kyaing Tong belonged to the Chiang Mai's circle of mong which stretched as far as the Mekong river and even down to Bago area (Abhakorn, 2005). As regard to the hegemony of Phraya Mangrai, Chiang Mai Chronicle mentions that he once visited to Inwa to make subordinate alliance with the king of Inwa. He was well-treated by the King of Inwa who submitted him the families of skilled gold, silver, copper, iron smiths. After receiving craftsmen, king Mangrai sent the goldsmith to Kyaing Tong (Chiang Mai, 1998). Another sources mention that the eastern Shan States and Lan Na kingdom of north Thailand (Chiang Mai) had strong political relations which dated from the establishment of sawbwas rule and of a strong polity in Kyaing Tong in thirteenth century A.D. Chiang Mai regarded Kyaing Tong as a "younger brother" state or subordinate state. The marital alliance existed between the-two states even though the power struggles and skirmishes interrupted the alliance (Conway, 2006). Any way, Kyaing Tong-Chiang Mai relations were based on the blood ties between the rulers. However, the rule of sawbwas who on belong to the blood ties between the rulers. However, the rule of sawbwas who on belonged to the blood of Chiang Mai was interrupted by the succession of Chao Chet Phantu as sawbwa of Kyaing Tong in 1456. Although his ancestral line was obscure, it is known that he was installed by King Trilok of Chiang Mai. When Chao Sai Phrom (Than Tun, 204) became sawbwa of Kyaing Tong, the relations with Chiangmai broke down due to the Chiang Mai's support to Chao Sam Khong, a rival claimant of Chao Sai Phram (Chiang Mai, 1998).

From that time on to the rise of Taungoo hegemony, Kyaing Tong sawbwas established its own circle of power and with alliances with its own Mong Lam and Chiang Yai.

The advent of the Myanmar's hegemony under King Bayinnaung after mid-sixteenth century AD terminated the conflicts as well as the political independence of eastern Shan States and neighbouring kingdoms of Chiang Mai and Laos. By 1574, Lin Zin (Laos) invaded peripheral areas of Chiang Mai and Ayutthaya. When the news of Lin Zin invasion was submitted by the La Wa chiefs to Bago, King Bayinnaung discussed with his son and ministers to despatch military expedition to eastern Shan States, Lao and Chiang Mai. On 22 September 1574, the king himself led the army to the capital of Lin Zin (U Thayaw, 206). Kyaing Tong sawbwa Sao Mong Kha (1560-68) assisted King Bayinnaung to accomplish military expedition. Indeed, Sao Mong Kha followed suit of his father Phra Kyaukyon Phraya Reinda (1524-60) who became subordinate alliance of King Bayinnaung since his conquest on Trans-Than Lwin states. Phraya Reinda gave military assistance to King Bayinnaung in Ayutthaya campaign. For his collaboration, Kyaukyon Phraya Reinda received cordial treatment from the king when he visited to the court of Hanthawadi in 1559. The king gave a set of tipitaka scriptures to Phara Reinda. The subordinate alliance between Kyaing Tong and Hanthawadi was maintained in the time of Sao Mong Kha who received ten elephants and tipitaka scriptures from the king (Than Tun, 2004). After the conquest of Chiangmai in 1574, King Bayinnaung secured Myanmar rule in Laos, Gon (Kyaing Tong), La Weik region and eastern Shan States by stationing outposts and garrisons.

Soon after the withdrawal of Myanmar forces from Trans-Than Lwin region, subordinate chief of Lin Zin, who was installed by King Bayinnaung through the oath of allegiance, relinquished his throne and took refuge into Kyaing Tong. The king sent troops of his subordinate chiefs to arrest Lin Zin chief. As he saw the strength of Myanmar armies, Kyaing Tong sawbwa submitted himself to Thado Minsaw son of King Bayinnaung, with tributes. He told that the chief of Lin Zin did not take refuge in his state. After hearing
the report of Kyaing Tong sawbwa, the king despatched Thayei Letya and Yaza Pyinnya to Kyaing Tong where they had to accompany with an official of Chiang Mai to watch the situation. In 1575, the king additionally despatched Banya Dala with 30 elephants, 300 horses and 10000 men to Kyaing Tong sawbwa Sao Mong Kha welcomed Banya Dala with musical troupe and gifts. He submitted his daughter and gifts to King Bayinnaung. Owing to the conquest of Kyaing Tong, neighbouring states of Ayudhaya and Lin Zin sent tributes to the king Bayinnaung (Gamani Thingyan, 2003).

In addition to the maintenance of allegiance, Kyaing Tong sawbwa played an important role in the power struggle of Chiang Mai and he gave assistance to Nawrahta Saw to win the throne of Chiang Mai in 1578 and gave additional help to King Bayinnaung to attack Chiang Mai in 1582 (Chiang Mai, 1998). For his loyalty and assistance, Kyaing Tong sawbwa Sao Mong Kha received ten elephants and gifts from the king. After the death of Sao Mong Kha in 1598, his son Sao Kham Tao (1598-1620) ascended the throne of Kyaing Tong (Scott and Hardiman, 1901). During that time, former hegemony of Myanmar was gradually on the wane due to the demise of King Bayinnaung and the rise of Nanda Bayin. The inconclusive warfares during 30 years of King Bayinnaung’s reign greatly exhausted the economic and human resources of the kingdom even through the king alleviated with the war captives and booties from the campaigns against Shan States and neighbouring kingdoms. During Nanda Bayin’s reign, Thais invaded into Lower Myanmar. Although Nanda Bayin waged five wars against Ayuddha, his attempts were ended with military disasters (U Kala, 2006c). In this situation Thai levies under Na Reik overran Kyaing Tong in 1600. Although Nanda Bayin could not help Kyaing Tong sawbwa to wipe out the Thai forces, the death of Na Reik and the spread of an epidemic disease to the elephants led the Thais to withdraw from Kyaing Tong. After the end of skirmish with Thais, Sao Kham Tao enabled to develop the region (Hman-nan, 2008c).

When Sao Mong Khat (1620-37) become sawbwa of Kyaing Tong, the political instability broke out with the outbreak of the uprisings of subordinate chief and attacks of Mong Nai and Man-hong in 1621. In this time King Anaukpetlun (1605-28) of Nyaung-yan Dynasty an army comprised of 150 elephants, 15,000 horses and 40,000 under Baya Gamani to restore law and order. Kyaing Tong sawbwa responded the assistance of Anaukpetlun by submitting his daughter Hnin Kham Pao to the king. Anaukpetlun also subdued Mong Sè and Sipsongbanna with the help of Kyaing Tong (Hman-nan, 2008c). During King Tha Lun’s reign (1629-48), the first Sittan (land roll or land and revenue inquest) was compiled. Kyaing Tong was mentioned for the first time in this sittan as the easternmost outpost of Myanmar (Jambudipa, 1960).

With the exception of the Chinese demand of tribute in the reign of sawbwa Sao Ohn (1637-52) in 1648, Kyaing Tong stood as the autonomous region in restored-Taungoo period. The king of Myanmar also recognized the autonomous status of sawbwa. In some cases they had chosen the righteous claimant to succeed sawbwaship. Sao Ein Kham (1652-78) was selected by Myanmar king to succeed Sao Ohn. The stable friendship and subordinate alliance between Kyaing Tong and Myanmar was broken in the reign of King Sa-ne (1698-1714) who demanded the bride from Kyaing Tong sawbwa Sao Sam Phi (1702-8). As sawbwa failed to send his daughter, Myanmar forces invaded Kyaing Tong and killed Sao Sin Phi (Hman-nan, 2008). They stationed at Kyaing Tong for three years from 1708 to 1771. After twenty years of
interregnum, Myanmar chosen Maung Myo, a.k.a Sao Mong Khan, who belonged to the Kyaing Tong sawbwa gentry from his father and Nyaung Shwe sawbwa line from his mother, to ascend the throne of Kyaing Tong. Ten years after his rule of misconduct, he was deposed and fled to Chiang Mai. He was succeeded by his brother Sao Mong Sam (1740-86) who enabled to develop Kyaing Tong.

Kyaing Tong's relation with Myanmar in Konbaung period (1752-1885) began with the conflict between Chinese merchants and local people in 1765. When the Chinese merchants asked the debt from local people, the quarrel broke out and a Chinese merchant was killed in the brawl. During that time, Kyaing Tong sawbwa Sao Mong San visited to the court of Inwa to pay homage to king Hsinbyushin (1763-76) who had already sent a troops under sitke-regimental officer Shwe Taung Tet. After the massacre of a Chinese merchant, Shwe Taung Tet tried to negotiate with Chinese to give compensation and to arrest and to punish the murderer. However the Chinese viceroy of Yunnan Province did not satisfy with the Myanmar's offer and sent the troops under the commander of western front Mong-hsi Son-tu. When Kyaing Tong was besieged by the Chinese troops with those from Keng Rung, King Hsinbyushin sent 200 elephants, 2000 horses and 20,000 men on 27 December 1765. After the fierce battle, the Chinese commander was killed in action. The Chinese troops withdrew from Kyaing Tong after leaving casualties. The king ordered his troops to fortify Kyaing Tong to prevent from future invasion of Chinese (Than Tun, 2004). The successors of King Hsinbyushin realized the importance of Kyaing Tong and put the state under their protection.

When Sao Mong Sam passed away, his son Sao Khon Tai had to face with the invasion of Chiang Mai due to the faithful alliance with Myanmar king. In 1802, Kyaing Tong and its ruler were captured by Chiang Mai troops. Sao Khon Tai inevitably collaborated with the Chaing Mai for the expansion of the latter's power to Sipsongbanna. However his successor Sao Maha Khannan decided to cease the collaboration with Chiang Mai and owed his allegiance to King Badon in 1814. For his loyalty to Myanmar, his successors ruled Kyaing Tong in a continuous line until 1962 when the sawbwas of Kyaing Tong was forced to relinquish their power (Abhakorn, 2005).

The king recognized sawbwa as the subordinate king and allowed to use the royal regalia including white umbrella, throne etc. Myanmar king appointed sitke-regimental officer at Kyaing Tong. Since mid-Konbaung period, Kyaing Tong was put under the jurisdiction of Mong Nai garrison where bohmu-mintha the prince who was sent by the king to serve the duty of the commandant of garrison. Later Kyaing Tong became the important headquarters along with Hsenwi, Moby, and Bhamo. Myanmar sitke in Kyaing Tong was assisted by two na-gans-liaison officers, clerks and 50 armed men. He was allowed to attend the meeting of Kyaing Tong sawbwa. However he did not have privilege to interfere the decision of sawbwa. Whenever a commandant was appointed and dispatched by the King, Kyaing Tong sawbwa and his headmen had to welcome him from a place three miles away from the town (Scott and Headman, 1901). The main duty of commandant was to watch the situations of Trans-Than Lwin region and submit reports through Mong Nai Headquarters to the royal capital. They were allowed to enjoy the market tax and tax imposed on the gambling; booth. Myowuns (fief holders of town) were also appointed to administer the subordinate towns like Mong Yin, Mong Yong, Mong Lin, Mong Pyin, etc. With the exception of paying annual tributes and gifts to the king, the martial alliance was also
established between the king and sawbwas. In some cases, the nephew and son of sawbwa were sent to royal capital where they studied traditional administration treatises and court etiquettes. When reigning sawbwa passed away, he was sent to Kyaing Tong to succeed sawbwaship (Scott and Hardiman, 1901).

Kyaing Tong- Myanmar relations had some distinctive aspects. Firstly Kyaing Tong sawbwas were exempted from paying taxes by the king. They had to pay only annual tributes to the king and crown prince which was not later than 5th waning of Thadingyut (Uzana, 1960). The king gave reciprocal gifts to Kyaing Tong sawbwa. The gifts of king were usually more valuable than that of sawbwa (Hlut-mat, 1901). The special regard given by Kyaing Tong sawbwa by Myanmar king was the allowance to use four white umbrellas which was not allowed even to the crown prince (Uzana, 1960).

Although successive sawbwas of Kyaing Tong owed their allegiance to Myanmar king, they could not be neglected, the hostilities from their immediate neighbours; Chiang Mai and Thailand. In 1807, Chaing Mai troops led by uparat-second prince of the king invaded Kyaing Tong (Chiang Mai, 1993). The ruling Prince Maha Khanan fled to Mong Yang but hundreds of families moved to Chaing Mai and transferred their allegiance to Prince Kawliwa of Lan Na. Over time members of royal family of Kyaing Tong and many commoners were taken to Chaing Mai. They were allowed to settle on the outskirts of the city (Conway, 2006). The fugitive sawbwa Maha Khanam organized the followers in Mong Yong and Mong Lwe to restore his rule. He despatched two deputies Hsen lampariyan and Tao Khamwan to King Badon to ask help. At first king Badon did not recognize Maha Khanum and even sent a troop to arrest him. In 1813, Maha Khanam went to Amarapura and submitted twelve elephants to the king. After winning the support of king Badon, Maha Khanam went back to Mong Yang and moved to Kyaing Tong in 1817 (Than Tun, 2004).

After the outbreak of the First Anglo-Myanmar war, King Rama III (1824-51) and IV (1851 -1868) invaded Kyaing Tong and Keng Hung. According to Conway, the Siamese Commissioner to Lan Na, Krom Pichit Prichakon wrote that" ... regarding Keng Tung it is most unfortunate that it lies nearer to its than Burma, that it is well-watered and rich in rice... The younger brother of the ruler of Chiang Mai could be sent to look after the country. This encouragement strengthened the ambition of Bangkok to put Kyaing Tong under its suzerainty. In 1852 and 1854 Thais invaded Kyaing Tong. Mong Nai Sitke Maha Nawratha defended the town. After fierce fighting, Thai troop withdrew from Kyaing Tong (Maung Maung Tin, 2004c). After the demise of Maha Khanam in 1857, Maha Pong (1857-76) ascended the throne of Kyaing Tong. He was succeed by Sao Seng (1876-81) who was raised in the Myanmar palace since 1843 King Mindon let his sister Yadana Dewi to marry with Sao Seng. Sao Seng was the last sawbwa of Kyaing Tong who maintained his loyalty and friendship to King Mindon. He visited to Mandalay to pay last homage to King Mindon (Hlut-mat, 1901). The king also returned gifts to Kyaing Tong sawbwa, his Maha Devi and four minister (Than Tun, 2004). The homage of Kyaing Tong sawbwa became the last sign of friendship to Myanmar.

When new sawbwa Sao Kon Tai (1881-86) ruled Kyaing Tong in 1881, Mong Nai Sawbwa and Mong Nong Sawbwa revolted against King; Thibaw and dispose with Kyaing Tong. Sao Kon Tai collaborated with fugitive sawbwa to throw off Myanmar yoke due to his personal grudge against King Mindon on the
appointment of Kyaing Yong Sawbwa. He slew Myanmar Commandant and thirty followers. Mean while, the attempts of Kyaing Tong Sawbwa and his allies to depose King Thibaw was strengthened by the arrival of Lin Bin Prince to Kyaing Tong in 1885. The Prince, son of late Prince Kanaung, had taken refuge to British Myanmar after Myingun rebellion in 1866. He was appointed Myo-ok in Mawlamyine where he met with the agents of Kyaing Tong Sawbwa and allies. After discussion, Prince Limbin went to Kyaing Tong and arrived on 10 December 1885 (Scott and Hardiman, 1901). However it was too late for Lin Bin Prince and sawbwas because the British had already annexed Mandalay.

After the occupation of Upper Myanmar, the former subordinate states of Myanmar king in Shan States were left unoccupied for a couple of years. The British government had no definite plan on the future of Shan States including Kyaing Tong. In addition the rebellion of Limbin Confederacy, Kayinni (Kayah State), anti-British campaign of Saw Yan Naing, chaotic situations of Hsipaw and North Hsenwi (Sai Aung Tun, 2009) forced the British to take an immediate action for the pacification of Shan States. The British officers convinced that the situations needed to provide autonomous rights of the Shan chiefs and to introduce proper management of the state affairs with fairness and justice. In August 1888, Shan States were divided into two administrative divisions; Northern Shan States and Southern Shan States. As regard to the eastern Shan States, the British handled on the matter of these states with caution because the frontier of Trans-Than Lwin area was touched those of China, Siam and French Indochina. The boundary between the Trans-Than Lwin region and her immediate neighbours had never been properly demarcated (Handershot, 1952).

After the pacification of northern and southern Shan States, it is impossible for British government for Kyaing Tong Sawbwa to stand a aloof and be independent. Kyaing Tong Sawbwa Sao Khun Pu wrote to J.G Scott, Assistant Superintendent of Southern Shan States, that he would like to enjoy independent status by merging Kyaingyongyi and Monglingyi into his jurisdiction (Crosthwaite, 1912). Thus the Government decided to despatch an expedition to Kyaing Tong. J.G Scott, Political Officer and Assistant Superintendent of Southern Shan States, was entrusted to lead the expedition. Finally, the British troop left Mong Nai to Kyaing Tong in February 1890 and arrived at Kyaing Tong on 14 March 1890. Before he left Mong Nai Scott attempted to win the allegiance of Mong Nai sawbwa Hkun Kyi. He urged the chiefs of Kyaing Tong, Kyaing Cheng, Kyaing Hun and Mong Lin to submit themselves to the British as they did to Myanmar King in the past (Hardershoto, 1952). When Scott arrived Kyaing Tong, Sawbwas Sao Khun Pu came to Scott and discussed the matter of the acceptance of sanad Sao Khun Pu finally agreed to accept the sanad. He also agreed to attend the Durbars along with other Sawbwas. On 29 March 1890, Durbar was held in honour of Khun Pu who became legitimate ruler of Kyaing Tong (Crosthwaite, 1912). The acceptance of British suzerainty by Kyaing Tong Sawbwa paved the way for the establishment of colonial rule in Trans-Than Lwin states because many of myo-zas (fief holders of town) were kinsmen of Kyaing Tong Sawbwa. At the Kyaing Tong Durbar, Scott exposed the British policy of the pacification and promotion of trade in Eastern Shan States (Mangrai, 1965). In order to establish colonial administration, the British established the headquarters to Taungyi under Commissioner and six superintendents to deal with sawbwas and chiefs. The policy of the British towards the rule of sawbwa reads thus:
Let the hereditary Shan Chiefs be maintained. Let us come under your protection. Attempts have been made and are making by ambitious chiefs to set up Burmese Princes and in their names to dominate the rest of the States. We have put down one such attempt and are resisting another. Assure us of your protection to our clergy and religion and tell us what you want us to do (White, 1886).

The British recognized Kyaing Tong as a "subordinate alliance" and not taken under the direct rule of British Crown. The sanad granted to Kyaing Tong sawbwa was unique. Unlike the other states, Kyaing Tong sawbwa needed to pay annual gifts, instead of paying taxes, to the British government as they did to Myanmar kings. In addition, the British government did not reserve a proprietary right in minerals and forests. The sawbwa was needed of sanad, the sawbwa could at any time nominate a person to be his successor (Symes, 1893). He could change his nomination and the British government did not interfere in the succession.

Like the nomination of successor under Myanmar king, Kyaing Tong sawbwa had to inform the British authority the name of successor. He submitted his nomination to be Political Officer and Superintendent of Shan States to get recommendation. Then the application was further submitted to the chief secretary. The final approval application was further submitted to the Chief Secretary. The final approval of nomination was made by the Lt-Governor. When a durbar was held in Yangon Kyaing Tong Sawbwa attended the ceremony. Lieutenant Governor bestowed to accept nine gun salutes to Sawbwa at the ceremonies of state (Grant, 1923). In addition, according to the Shan State Act of 1888, sawbwa was empowered to appoint officers to undertaken or to taken part in the administration of the local government to participate in the administration of the state (Manual, 1932). Under new Act, the Lt. Governor appointed an assistant superintendent at Kyaing Tong. The headquarters of sub-treasury officer and magistrate was also kept at Kyaing Tong.

Actually, the Shan State Act of 1888 limited the power of Sawbwas including those of Kyaing Tong even though they were allowed to enjoyed the autonomous status. At the beginning, sawbwas hoped that conditions would favour them to enjoy the status as they enjoyed during the pre-colonial days. However their right of taxation was limited (Gordon, 1898). Even their family matters were regulated by the British political officers. The British government also controlled the extraction of forests and mineral resources.

At the beginning of 1920s a preliminary proposal for the Federation of Shan States came out through the discussion between Sawbwas and British authorities. On 22 March 1920, Lieutenant Governor Sir Reginald Craddock Laid down a scheme for the Federation of Shan States and it was publicized before Sawbwas at Taunggyi Durbar (Minute, 1920). According to the scheme, Federated Shan States became a sub-entity of Myanmar with its own administration and revenue. The Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents acted as justices of peace in Shan States. Kyaing Tong Sawbwa, along with those of Hsipaw, Mong Nai, Tong Peng, Nortu Hseinwi, Mong Mit and Yawnghwe were gazetteed as Additional Session Judges in their jurisdictions.
The government headquarters was stationed at Loi Mwe. In 1894, frontier demarcation commission, headed by Sir George Scott, arrived at Kyaing Tong. They met with the French boundary commission. Two years later, the discussion concluded with the declaration of defining Mekong River as the boundary between the two countries (Scott and Hardiman, 1900b). In 1891 a preliminary survey was made to demarcate southern boundary of Kyaing Tong with Siam. The Mai Sai River was demarcated as the boundary line between Kyaing Tong and Siam. Under new demarcation of boundaries, the area of Kyaing Tong district, comprising 32 Hkun towns, was much larger than when it was under Myanmar king (Scott and Hardiman, 1900b). As Myanmar kings put Kyaing Tong under Mong Nai garrison, the British Government established fort Stedman at Nyaung Shwe which dealt with the affairs of Southern Shan States and Trans-Than Lwin region (Conway, 2006).

When Sao Kham Hpu passed away, his younger brother Sao Kawn Kia Intaleng (1897-1935) succeeded the Sawbwa. Like his predecessor, Intaleng was recognized as the subordinate alliance of the British and conferred the salute of nine guns and a seat at any Durbar. However at the Delhi Durbar of 1906, he was alleged to be involved in the opium smuggling and was deprived of the salute of nine guns. At the same time he was reduced from the position of premier chief to that of fourth on the list of precedence (Scott, 1908).

As Intaleng was borne that punishment with dignity and his efforts on the regional development plans such as the construction of roads, the British decided to honour him by restoring the solute of nine guns at any durbar. Another achievement of Intaleng was the abolition of toll station at Thai-Myanmar border. A subordinate chief of Intaleng, named Hpaya Hawngluk, opened a toll station at Tachileik and shared the toll receipts. His conduct has been reported to the Sawbwa for punishment. Consequently, Sawbwa ordered to abolish the toll station, Hawngluk was punished and the money taken from the travellers and merchants was to be paid back (Gordon, 198). Later J.G., Scott visited all the external frontier of Kyaing Tong State and found that visited all the external frontier of Kyaing Tong State and found that Sawbwa had 'abolished the tolls which formerly levied on all goods entering or leaving the state.

Intaleng was responsible for the reconstruction of town after the devastation of fire in 1906. Owing to the achievement of Sawbwa, there was no diminution in the prosperity of the town. Sawbwa has taken advantage of the fire to throw back the frontage of the houses so that the streets in the business part of the town are immensely improved. The merchant shops were all being rebuilt and there was no loss of population. The native of India and Chinamen in large number began to settle in Kyaing Tong (Scott, 1908). Lieutenant Governor was much pleased with the actions of Sawbwa (Rice, 1908) and decided to restore the salute of nine guns on 26 June 1908, His Majesty's Birthday (Scott, 1908). Intaleng was well known for his benevolent rule. In his reign old haw was demolished and built the new haw in colonial style. He built Maha Myatmuni Pagoda in 1923 and in 1929 arranged a great feast and it was still remembered by the local people (Hong Kham, 2014).

Intaleng was succeeded by his son Sao Kawng Tai on April 17, 1937. Sao Kawn(g) Tai was a young man of 23 years of age, and was recently married to the daughter of Hsipaw Sawbwa. He learned at the School
for sons of Shan Chiefs in Taunggyi and then went to England to study at Sheffied University for one year. Although he being the eldest son of Intaleng, his mother was not the Mahadevi or chief wife. However the British authorities accepted his succession to the Sawbwa in accordance with Khun custom (Head, 1922). His reign was short-lived. He was assassinated in October 1937. After the assassination, the British government did not appoint new Sawbwa and Captain V.G Robert, deputy commissioner of frontier area, ruled Kyaing Tong. The assassination of Sao Kwang Tai was still a unsolved mystery in Kyaing Tong. He was shot to death before the very eyes of fifty body guards. When he was assassinated, his Mahadevi was on her way back home from London and arrived Kyaing Tong on 1 November 1937 (Than Tun, 2004).

During colonial period, commercial and political relations of Kyaing Tong and the neighbouring provinces of Chiengsen and Chiengri in Thailand developed. The discussion between the British Minister Resident in Bangkok and Consul General of Chieng Mai resulted the development of commercial relations between Kyaing Tong and said northern states of Thailand (Beckett, 1898a). Kyaing Tong Sawbwa Intaleng also showed his interest to enhance commercial relations by writing to the Thai High Commissioner. The letter mentions that the Chowfa (Sawbwa) of Kyaing Tong and chiefs of Chiengsen and Chiengri belongings they do to the same family and accustomed as they have been from the earliest times to the exchange of visits the one with other intercourse, but at the same time should be warned to avoid the discussion that the wished to buy elephants from Chiengrai (Phya SongSuradet, 1898). The major trade items were supposed to be rice and other agricultural products areas of Thailand (Bird, 1941). Another important trade item might to opium. Although the British prohibited Kyaing Tong Sawbwa and local chiefs from smuggling opium, they entered an agreement with Thai authorities for opium trade. In September 1920, Thai government have completed a contract with Ah Mong, a local trader. In September 1920, Thai government have completed a contract with Ah Mong, a Cantonese of Kyaing Tong but usually resident at Mongpre in Thailand for supply of 5000 viss of opium at Rs. 45 perviss delivered at Bangkok by November 5, 1920. Although then Sawbwa of Kyaing Tong requested permission to levy a export tax for the benefit of the state at Re 1 per viss (Chief Secretary, 1920). Anyway, owing to the development of the probabilities of commercial privilege, some Thai subjects from Chiengrai and Chiang Mai settled in Kyaing Tong State. Sawbwa Intaleng and his successors allotted land for Thai settlers (Fowler, 1941). Over time, Kyaing Tong became the trading town of eastern Shan States where Thai, Chinese, Indian and local traders settled for commercial purposes.

During World War II, Kyaing Tong was ruled by Thailand. Under a pact of August 20, 1943, that Japan accepted the territories occupied by Thai troops in the Shan States as part of Thailand (Abhakorn, 2005). According to the Thai-Japanese agreement of December 21, 1941, Thai forces had to carry out five important tasks including advancing to Mandalay via Kyaing Tong. Although Thais could not accomplish these tasks, Thai forces occupied Kyaing Tong. According to a Thai scholar, "Phibun's regime had the aspirations to create a new order based on a combination of ethnic conscious, universal culture, and military autocracy (Abhakorn, 2005). On 1st January 1947, the British Government and Thai Government signed and Armistice Treaty. Thai government agreed to pay sums of money as compensation for damages and taking war booties from Kyaing Tong and Mong Pang by Thai forces. However, the case continued up to the post-independence era when AFPFL Government renewed the claim to Thai...
Government (Proceeding, 1955). The problem of the claimant of Compensation from Thai Government prolonged to 1950. Thai Government offered £ 5,245,000 for compensation. In this situation British Government interfered in the problem and negotiated with the Thai Government (Proceeding, 1950). After the War, the British merged Kyaing Tong into Union of Myanmar. On 1 April 1947, Sao Sai Long (1947-1959) was appointed Sawbwa of Kyaing Tong. During independent era Kyaing Tong and former Hkun cities were reorganized as eastern Shan States and put under the jurisdiction of a secretary of frontier area. On 1 October 1950, Premier U Nu Government appointed the Secretary of Frontier Areas to supervise the affairs of Eastern Shan States. The first Secretary was Khon Shili. He was succeeded by U Nyo and U Tun Lu (Than Tun, 2004). During independence era, Kyaing Tong was established as the Sub-division and it was sub-divided into Southern Kyaing Tong sub-division, comprising Tachileik and Mongpyin and Northern Kyaing Tong Sub-division, comprising Kyaing Tong and Monywang (Chairman, 1957). However sawbwa’s rule continued to exist even after the relinquishment of their rule by other sawbwas on 24 April 1959 (Than Tun, 2004). During the post-independence era, the tranquility prevailed in Kyaing Tong and the Eastern Shan States was short-lived.

In 1949 Kuomintang, after their defeat against People’s Liberation Army of Communist China, invaded into the northeastern Shan States (Sai Aung Tun, 2009). These Kuomintang soldiers were led by General Limi of the Eighth Army, Lt. General Liu Kuo Chuan of the Twenty-sixth Division and Major General Mah Chaw Yee and Major General Liu Chin Tsung of the Ninety-third Division (Burma Weekly Bulletin, 1953). By May 1951, the strength of Kuomintang forces increased up to two thousand and they established bases along the Myanmar-China border in Ko Kang and Mong Lun States. They also occupied the regions around Mong Yang and Kyaing Tong States. However they could not invaded into the city of Kyaing Tong (Sai Long Gyi, 2014). Many of the local population of Kyaing Tong and Mong Yong were forced to join the Kuomintang forces. Many people deserted their homes and fields. Some people were victimized in the skirmishes between the Kuomintang and Myanmar Army. Local people had to provide food and porters and recruits. As the Nationalist government of Taiwan supported the Kuomintang, the new airfields were built by the Kuomintangs in Mong Sat area of Kyaing Tong State (The Nation, 1953). Owing to the military operations of Myanmar Army and the diplomatic efforts of the Government of Myanmar at the United Nations, the activities Kuomintang forces in eastern Shan State gradually eliminated in 1953 (Sai Aung Tun, 2009). After the withdrawal of Kuomintangs from northeastern Shan States, the environs of Kyaing Tong State were left under war-torn situations. Sawbwa Sao Sai Long and local people made efforts to revitalize the tranquility and economy of the state. After the coup detat of 1962, Sao Sai Long was detained by the Revolutionary Council which eliminated the rule of sawbwa.

In conclusion, Kyaing Tong stood as an important ally of Myanmar throughout monarchical history. As Kyaing Tong state is located in the strategic place or on the cross road connecting Laos, China and northern Thailand, successive Myanmar kings considered Kyaing Tong as an important center of politics. Successive sawbwas of Kyaing Tong were recognized as the subordinate alliances of the kings and were allowed to use royal regalia including white umbrellas. During Konbaung period, Kyaing Tong became one of the important garrison towns in Shan States and put under the jurisdiction of Mong Nai Garrison. A commandant was appointed by the royal capital to assist sawbwa of Kyaing Tong. As an autonomous ruler, Kyaing Tong sawbwa had to deal with the judicial, financial and security matters. With the
exception of contributing levies in the Myanmar king's warfare against Ayutthaya, Kyaing Tong did not need to contribute levies for any war even in the outbreak of Anglo-Myanmar Wars. The special privilege of Kyaing Tong sawbwa was not need to pay taxes except annual tribute. During colonial period, the political and economic importance of Kyaing Tong was more prevalent. The British government recognized Kyaing Tong as the subordinate alliance and autonomous status was granted to successive sawbwas. With the exception of the rule of a British political agent in 1937, the rule of sawbwas were not interrupted up to the end of their hereditary right in 1962. During colonial period, Kyaing Tong became the political and commercial center of Eastern Shan States. The commercial relations with the neighbouring states of Chiang Mai and Chiangrai also developed. Nowadays, Kyaing Tong was thought to be overshadowed by the thriving cities of Tachileik and Taunggyi. The devastation of trade by the Kuomintang aggression and development of Tachileik and Taunggyi probably reduced Kyaing Tong from the status of commercial and political center. The former became a commercial center and the latter being an administrative headquarters of Shan States. Poor municipal management and shortages of electricity are still prevalent in the city. The situations of education and public healthcare are not satisfactory. The problems of narcotic and drug abuse are still rising among the local people. Any way, local ethnic people; Akha, Lahu, Khun, Shan, etc are still embracing their time-honored culture and tradition.
References

Primary Sources
Beckett, W.R.D, 1898, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Dept. dated 12th May 1898, File No.35-5, Series 1/1, Acc: No.3433, National Archive Department (Henceforth: NAD)
Beckett, W.R.D., 1898b, to Phya Song Suradet, Siamese High Commissioner of the Lao Chaing States, File No.35-5, Series 1/1, Acc No.3433, National Archive Department, NAD
Bird, H.R, 1941, British Consul in Chiangmai to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Burma, 11 July 1941, Political Dept, Series 1/1, Acc:6252, N.A.D
Chairman. 1957. The Establishment of Kyaing Tong Sub-division, dated 16 February, 1957, Acc: No.351, AG 12/5, NAD
Chief Secretary 1920, to H.A Thronton, Esq, C.I.E, I.C.S, Superintendent and Political Officer, Southern Shan States, dated 30 October 1920, Political Dept, Series 1/1, Acc: No.4352, NAD
Fowler, R.W.D, 1941, Under Secretary, Defence Department, to P.C Fogarty, Esq I.C.S, Commissioner, Federated Shan States, dated 24, July 1941
Gordon, D.M, 1908, Assistant Supdt., Kengtung Subdivision to Sir J.G. Scott, Supdt and Political Officer, Southern Shan States, Political Dept, File No.45-25, Series 1/1, Acc No.6557
Grant, C.F, 1923, List of Ruling Princes (both Salutes and non-Salute Classified according to Provisional Order of Precedence), 27 January 1923, No.519 (B) 22, NAD
Head, W.R., 1922, Superintendent and Political Officer, Southern Shan States, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Burma, dated 6.6.1922, Political Dept, File No.368 B-22, Series 1/1, Acc:9663
Minute. 1920. Minute by the Lt. Governor on the Administration of the Shan States, May 22, 1920, File No.4s. 16 pt. 1, 1-11
Phya Song Suradet, 1898, Siamese High Commissioner, to W.R.D Beckett, Esq, Her Britannse Majesty's Consul at Chiangmai, dated May 1898, file No.35-5, Series 1/1, Acc:3433 NAD
Rice, 1908, The Chief Secretary to the Government of Burma, to J.G Scott Political Dept. File No.45-25, Series 1/1, Acc No.5667, N.A.D
Scott, J.G, 1891, Report on the Administration of Shan States for the Year 1890-91, Rangoon, Political Dept, NAD, Enclosure 7
Scott, J.G. 1908. to C.C Lowis, Officiating Chief Secretary to the Government of Burma, dated 29 May 1908, File No.45-25, Series 1/1, Acc:6557
Symes, E.S, 1893, to the Secretary to the Government of Burma, dated 13 Sept, 1893, Foreign Dept., No.371-45, 23, NAD

Secondary Sources
Burma Weekly Bulletin, May 5, 1953
Conway, Susan. 2006. The Shan: Culture, Arts and Crafts, Bangkok, River Book Co.Ltd, 18, 38
Gamani Thingyan, Sithu. 2003. Zimme Yazawin (Chiang Mai Chronicle), Yangon, Universities’ Historical Research Center, 54, 91
Hong Kham, U. 2014. Interview with U Hong Kham, Age 80, Pagoda Trustee Board, Maha Myatmuni Pagoda, Kyaing Tong, 10 October 2014
Nations (Rangoon), 6 January 1953
Sai Aung Tun, 2009, History of the Shan States from its Origins to 1962, Chiang Mai, Silk Worm Books, 24, 163-64
Sai Lon Gyi, U. 2014. Interview with U Sai Long Gyi, Age 78, Member of Pagoda Trustee, Maha Myatmuni Pagoda, Kyaing Tong, 20 October 2014
U-Thaywa, Amatkyi (Minister). 2005. Hanthawaddy Hsinbyumyashin Ayedawbon Mawgun U-dan (The Achievements and Conquest of King Bayinnaung), U Toe Hla (Member of Myanmar Historical Commission) (ed), Yangon, Myanmar Historical Commission, 125-130
Uzana, Thiri. 1960. Lokabyuhakyan (Treatise on the Court Customs and Administration), Yangon, Yabye Publishing, 39-50, 60, 224