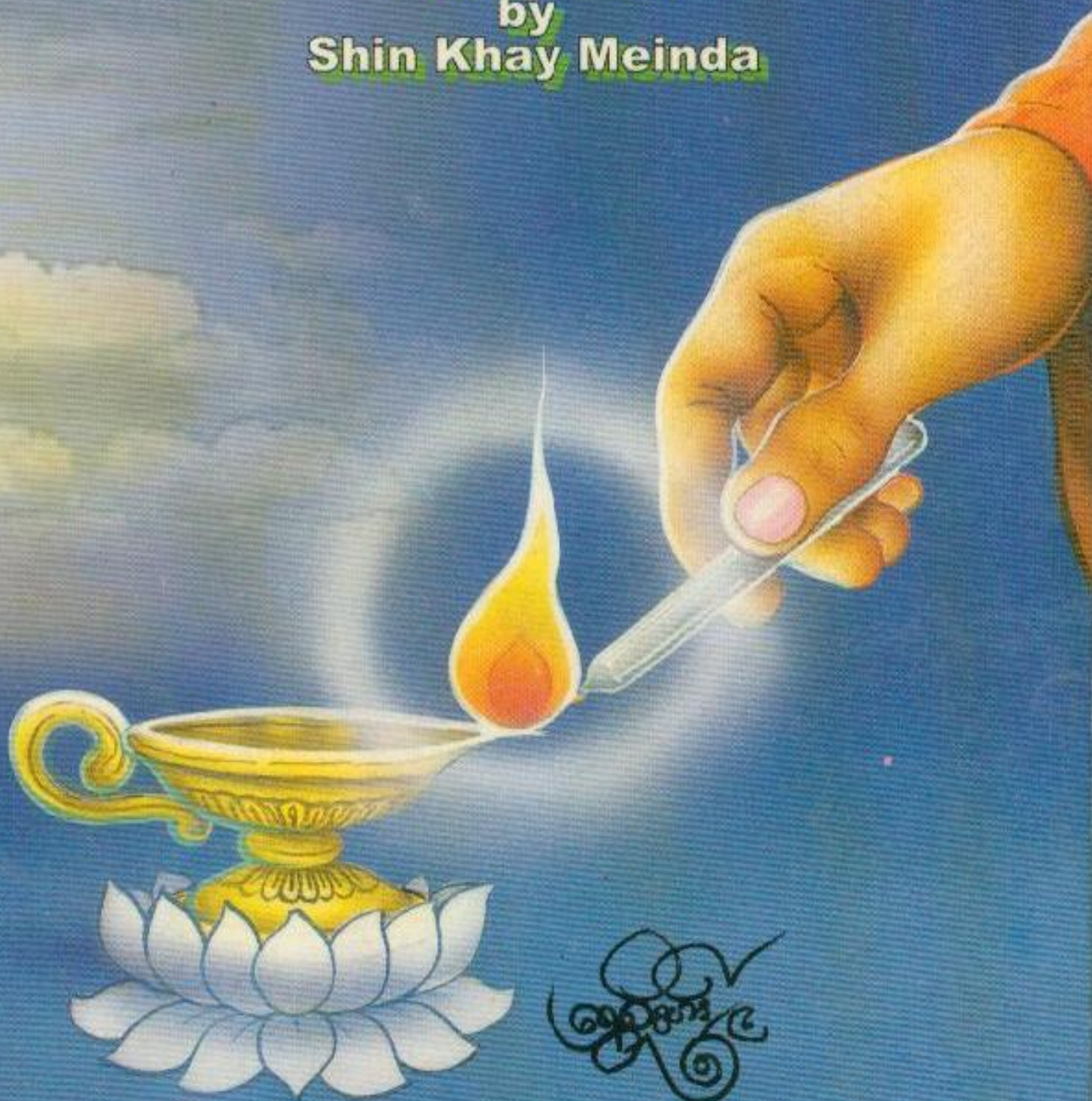


Myaing Gye: Ngu Sayadaw
A Jahan who
Shines the light of Dhamma

Myaing Nan Swe

Translated
by
Shin Khay Meinda



Foreward

This book is not a biography of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za-na. In fact it is a personal record of Sayadaw's life experiences. As mortal being Sayadaw has passed through many ups and downs in his life. This has been recorded and narrated without any bias. Facts, even though they may be bitter are being presented in this book.

Most biography books tell successes and achievements of the well-known persons. On the other hand biography books usually write about eminent Sayadaws. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za-na considers that the time being not ripe to write about his biography yet. Some people seek permission from Sayadaw to write about Sayadaw's life experiences. Sayadaw fears that the book would merely tells about his successes and achievements.

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The writer who knows superficially about U Thu Za-na would write just to please Sayadaw—praising his successes and achievements. This, Sayadaw cannot allow. What he wants to write is nothing more than his personal experiences and outlook on life. And nothing more.

Considering this U Thu Za-na gave permission to his bosom friend who knows more about Sayadaw than any other person to write Sayadaw's personal experiences. The author said, "If I were going to write about the life experiences of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za-na I only want to write facts on Sayadaw's personal experiences not his successes and achievements. If only I were allowed to do so will I write such a book".

This is in keeping with Sayadaw's opinion about himself.

Only facts and personal experiences are recorded in this book and nothing more. In other words this book is not a biography of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za-na, but a recorded personal experiences of Sayadaw U Thu Za-na.

U Thu Za-na

Nan Oo Taw-ya Monastery

Myaing-gye: Ngu Special Region
Kayin State

* * * * *

It happened not long ago.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw once met an old friend of his, U Thu Za-na and the Venerable Sayadaw are eminent Sayadaws in the State. U Thu Za-na saw the Sayadaw was comfortably seated in a posh saloon car which was accompanied by a group of nuns, hermits and white robed devotees fully laden on two Hilux cars.

While Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za-na was in an ordinary Hilux pick-up. This pick-up was lent by one of Sayadaw's disciples. This disciple remarked, that, the car has been put at the disposal of Sayadaw but he (Sayadaw) must pay the cost of petrol. And by that time Sayadaw U Thu Za-na was accompanied by a doctor, and three others who were on duty.

Thus, Sayadaw U Thu Za-na wants to live as the way it is—simple and contented life.

* * * * *

U Thu Za-na is a young monk with a few years in monkhood (*Vassa*). The author has reached an agreement with U Thu Za-na—not to write about his biography. Therefore, my purpose is not to write Sayadaw's biography, or for any cause or causes, but merely to write everything as it was, as I saw and understand it.

As everybody knows that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za-na has become a well-known person in the country. Also rumours have been rife in the country.

Some said Sayadaw stands on this side. Some accused him that he is from the other side.

Who and What Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is? This book will after all answer all these questions. The readers will, after reading this book, understand to some extent Who and What Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is.

Since time immemorial zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas were dotted along the banks of Than Lwin River in western Kayin State. In Kayin Language, Than Lwin River is called "Ho Lau Ka Low" (chaung or creek dotted with zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas on either banks of the river). As millinnium passed these zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas

were ravaged by time and were lost in the jungles. A certain jahan (monk) appeared at this place. He went through one forest after another, climbed one mountain after another and began re-building these ruined zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas.

This jahan (monk) shines and keeps on shining the Light of *Sasana* in this part of the world.

This is the story of that jahan (monk).

Myaing Nan Swe

Acknowledgement

In this publication, the book contains a few facts about the formation of the DKBA as mentioned in the statement No. 1/94.

We the DKBA would like to express our gratitude and support towards the publication of this book in accordance with the life experiences and ministries of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za Na for the readers to analyse and understand it. The book is a record of Myaing-gyi: Ngu Sayadaw's own words about his genuine ministries based on holiness and goodness. The true effort of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is to reconstruct the past glory by renovating pagodas, constructing religious buildings has a coincidence with the establishment of the DKBA. Misconception has been developed among some people towards the ministries of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw followed by the establishment of the DKBA. Question would be raised over this issue on whether Sayadaw is doing ministries to establish DKBA or for the pur-

pose of protecting his ministries. But his ministerial work does not fit into the quality of the above question. The objective of Sayadaw's ministries is to spread the Light of Buddhism among the people so that they would respect the religions and become literate.

On the other hand, we, the DKBA did not take opportunity over Myaing-gye Ngu Saya-daw's ministries in establishing our own organization. The DKBA which worked together with the KNU in the past, did not plan to form this organization. Another thing is that we had never thought about the establishment of the DKBA would come into existence as the result of the friction over religious matters. When we were in the KNU, we knew that the KNU has constituted its policy of religious freedom, over all religions. Though the KNU had its policy of religious freedom, it did not give equal opportunity to all the religious groups, especially it showed favour to the Christians who enjoyed greater opportunity. The Buddhists were denied the rights of equal opportunity and were not given a full financial support, especially when cel-

ebrating religious festivals. In addition to this, the KNU would say that the religious festivals were a waste of money and would decrease the income of its organization. On the other hand the Christians were given a large amount of financial support whenever they religious ceremony festivals.

The majority of the KNU Central Committee Members are Christians, so we can say that only three or four members in this Committee are Buddhist. The leaders in both governing body and the army unit who enjoyed greater opportunity of say were Christians. But we did not realize that, one day, the KNU would be divided over religious issue and the DKBA would be formed as it result. The readers of this book might conceive that the establishment of DKBA is the direct result of the ministries of Myaing-gye Ngu Sayadaw. The ministries of Myaing-gye Ngu Sayadaw is not only for the betterment of the Kayin people but also for the improvement of the life of every individual. As he was prohibited to carry out his ministerial work, the Buddhist people who served in the KNU organization could not bear the injus-

tice done to Sayadaw. As a result, they separated themselves from the KNU and formed the DKBA organization as a mean of protection for the Buddhist people, the temple, pagodas, monasteries and other religious buildings.

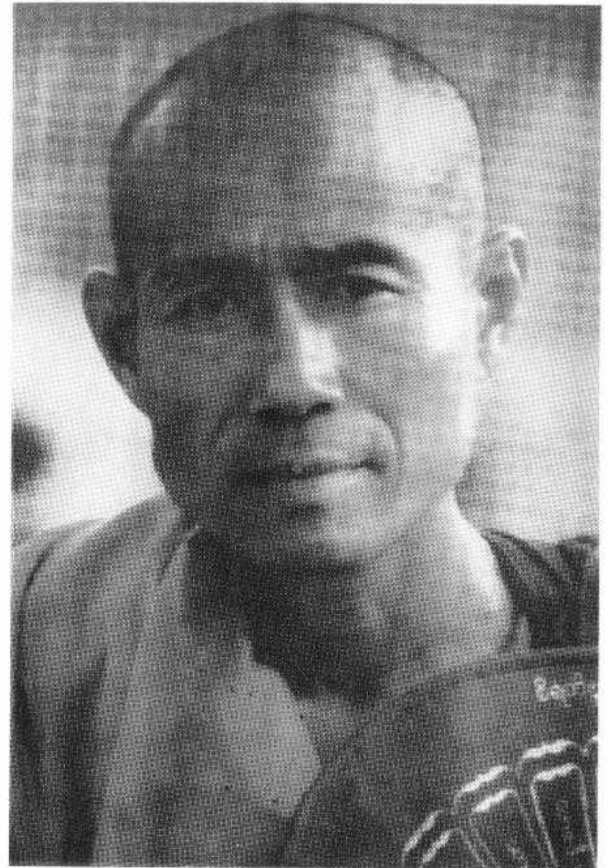
The sources in this book are reliable and true, it does not contain rumours, fictions and unreliable information. The book neither contains the facts about the effort of forming the DFBA nor the account of its existence. The ministries of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is to re-establish the past glory by preserving the old religious buildings and rebuilding the new ones. It is also necessary to protect Sayadaw's work and the mean of protecting it resulted in the formation of the DKBA.

As a whole, this book contains only the reliable sources of information about the life experiences and the work of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and therefore, we the DKBA express our support in the publication of this book.

Central Committee

DKBA

Myaing-gye: Ngu



MYAING-GYE : NGU SAYADAW U THU ZA-NA

Chapter I

In Kayin Language "Noh" means "*Inn*" or "Lake" "Hta" means "Ah-wa" or "Entrance". Therefore, Noh Hta Village means a "Village at the Entrance of the *Inn* or Lake". In Myanmar it is called "Inn-wa" Village. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw was born at Noh Hta Village, in Kayin State.

Noh Hta Village is 45 miles north of Hpa-an, a Capital City of Kayin State, and at the entrance of Yun-salin Chaung (Creek) on the west bank of Than Lwin River. On the east lies a Kawt Karat Island. Myaing-gye: Ngu lies on the eastern bank of Than Lwin River, Yun-salin Chaung (Creek) is in the south. Kawt Karat and Hlwa Hsin Villages are on the other bank and Noh Noh Bo *Inn* (Lake) on the west. Noh Hta Village is at the entrance of the *Inn* (Lake). Because the village is at the entrance of the lake, it is known as the "Village at the Entrance of the *Inn* (Lake)—Noh Hta Village".

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw was born of U Po Thon and Daw Mai Thin at Noh Hta Village on the 12th Waning Day of Second Waso, 1310 ME. He is the eighth of 12 offsprings. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw childhood name is Maung Than Sein. He attended Teacher Daw Kyin Myaing's School.

At the tender age of eight Maung Than Sein entered Samanera at Kawt Karat Monastery. His previous novicehood name was Shin Thaw-bi-tha. He studied Buddhist Scriptures and attended a primary school at Kawt Karat Village.

After passing fourth standard Shin Thaw-bi-tha continued his religious study at May-dar Wi Sathintike (Monastery where religious studies are conducted), Mawlamyaing, Mon State. He changed his novicehood name to Shin Thondara. He stayed at the monastery for three years and then moved to Gandayon Sathintike in Thaton, Mon State. Once Shin Thondara saw

certificates of *Pahtamabjan* Examinations of visiting monks from Joan Joan Kya Pariyatti Sathintike. Shin Thondara got interested in the certificates. By seeing his interest in the certificates the Presiding Sayadaw said, "No matter how much you have learned no one will respect you without having possessed the religious examination certificates. To be respected you got to have at least one certificate of *Pahtamabjan* Examination. Sayadaw wants you to sit for the *Pahtamabjan* Examination too".

Shin Thondara moved to Joan Joan Kya Pariyatti Sathintike in Mudon, Mawlamyaing, to study scriptures and to prepare for the religious examinations. It was the 8th Waxing Day of Kason, 1326 ME.

He well remembered that a conversation between the Presiding Sayadaw and Shin Thondara at the time of registration at Joan Joan Kya Pariyatti Sathintike.

"Is your monkhood name Shin Thondara?"

"Yes, Venerable Sayadaw."

"There is also another monk with the same name—Shin Thondara. I want you to change your monkhood name to Shin Thu Za-na."

"Yes, I am, Venerable Sayadaw."

"Thondara" means good and noble. Therefore, in layman language it is "Maung Kaung Myat" Mr Good. But I don't know whether there is good or noble in it. Thu Za-na means virtuous and upright. It's more exact in meaning than Thondara. Will you agree to adopt this monkhood name?"

"Yes, Venerable Sayadaw. I like to have this monkhood name."

Shin Thu Za-na attended courses on *Pahtamange*. He passed the examination in a

year. Shin Thu Za-na now had his own *Pahtamange* certificate which he had longed for so many years.

When the examination was over and recessed Shin Thu Za-na visited his native village, Noh Hta. He wanted his brother Maung Maung Kyi to ordain monkhood and like himself become a learned monk. With this noble aim, he brought Maung Maung Kyi to Joan Joan Kya Pariyatti Sarthintike.

He did not know at that time bringing Maung Maung Kyi to Joan Joan Kya Pariyatti Sarthintike would be a turning point in his life.

When they arrived at the Monastery Shin Thu Za-na continued studied for the intermediate class of *Pahtamabjan* and his brother Maung Maung Kyi studied primary level in Buddhist Scriptures. Shin Padicca, Maung Maung Kyi's monkhood name, fell seriously ill. Maung Maung Kyi never had been parted with his

parents. He became home-sick and this led to ill-health.

The Presiding Sayadaw advised Shin Thu Za-na to send back Maung Maung Kyi to his parents. So he accompanied his brother and went back to their village.

As he entered the house, the scene rendered his heart. His father was seriously ill and bed-ridden, and his mother health was also failing. Now he brought their younger son who was seriously ill. He also learned that all the farm-hands had fled. The cultivation season would soon be over and there were works to do. He must cover the lost time. Shin Thu Za-na pondered over the situation.

"Father is seriously ill and mother health is also failing. Maung Maung Kyi is sick, too. The cultivation season will soon be over. The whole family is sick, except me. The elder sister also has to look after her family. She too,

is occupied with her family affairs. Then, who will look after them? It is my duty to look after them. What shall I do?"

He quickly went back to Joan Joan Kya Monastery, and discussed the problem with his brother Sayadaw.

His brother Sayadaw suggested that he had no other choice rather than to become a layperson to look after his parents saying that he can learn at any time and cited a well-known Buddhist monk U Kyi Pwai of ancient Bagan Era who had learned Scriptures at later life.

He then left Joan Joan Kya Monastery and became a layperson. By seeing these his parents were sad. He alleviated his mother that he would become a monk after the situations were improved.

The next day, Maung Than Sein took over the work of his father. He began to chart

out his work programme. He hired farmhands and began transplanting paddy. On the other hand he consulted with his parents and began to learn the art of cultivation. He worked hard and things began to take a better shape.

His hope for better life came to an end when the insurgents called a compulsory military service. Local populace, except members of religious orders, were conscripted by the insurgents. The people were afraid of the nearest sword.

He became a member of the people's militia. As a courier of the insurgents, he was sent to various detachments and commands. In the course of carrying out his duty as a courier, he went through dense forests and climbed high mountains. He found many zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas in the forests and mountains which were ravaged by time immemorial. By seeing these ruined zedis, stupas, shrines and

pagodas Maung Than Sein moved with piety and determined to rebuilt this religious edifices when opportunities arise.

After completion of military service Maung Than Sein returned to a peaceful civilian life. With his father, he cleared 30 acres of virgin lands. Now his parents could live peacefully. It was his brother Maung Maung Kyi also was grown-up and was able to tend the fields.

Maung Than Sein's parents wanted to see their son to be a monk. He was now 20 years old.

U Kaweinda, Sayadaw of Wah Kaw Kyay Monastery, acting as a presiding Sayadaw at the ordination ceremony held at Khan-da Thain (ordination hall, *sima*), Maung Than Sein was ordained as a monk on the 8th Waxing Day of Kason 1330 ME. His monkhood name is U Thu Za-na.

U Thu Za-na stayed at Noh Hta Village for a week and then he left for Joan Joan Kya

Monastery, Mudon. Though he had been out of touch with the religious lessons for four years he attended course in intermediate class of *Pahtamabjan*. But he did not sit the *Pahtamabjan* Examination, instead he sat the *Pariyatti Hi-ta-kari* Grade I Examination.

When U Thu Za-na's father passed away he returned to the village and stayed about there for a while.

Once U Thu Za-na had a talk with his mother.

"Maung Maung Kyi is grown-up now. Let him do the farm works. Don't worry about me da ja ka ma gye:"

"Yes, Don't say I am alone and worried about me."

"The situation is improving now if compared with the last three or four years. Da ja ka ma gye: can trust on Maung Maung

Kyi. I am now thinking—if ever I were become a layperson I would be tied like a draught cattle by nose-ring rope. I well remember what father had once said—you are free only when there is no nose-ring rope. I must listen to father's advice. I am going to stay as *jahan* (monk) for life."

"Well say ashin hpaja:"

"Maung Maung Kyi can well look after the farm work and da ja ka ma gye: is just only to help him. I am going to continue my religious study. One day, perhaps, I can look after you."

U Thu Za-na returned to Mudon. He told all about this to his brother Sayadaw. Sayadaw wrote a story titled "When the Smoke are Cleared" and composed a poem "Grief Stricken in the Month of Nayan". Whenever U Thu Za-na longed for his father, he read the story and

the poem again and again until he got it by heart.

He tried hard studying the religious scriptures. He sat the *Pariyatti Hi-ta-kari* Grade II Examination and Intermediate Level *Pahtamabjan* Examination. He passed both examinations. He attended course in the highest class of *Pahtamabjan*. Pondered U Thu Za-na—"Hard work and diligent can only pass the examination. To pass the *Pahtamabjan* Examination at first attempt I must well verse the syllabus of *Pahtamabjan* Course I will have to take time to study the lessons." In view of this he did not sit the examination in the first year. On the other hand U Thu Za-na practised *Vipassana* (meditation) whenever he has time.

In those days, Joan Joan Kya Monastery was not a place for religious teachings. It was a meditation centre. Previous presiding Sayadaws of Joan Joan Kya Monastery practised medita-

tion throughout their life. Emulating these Sayadaws U Thu Za-na spent more time on meditation.

On the other bank of the Joan Joan Kya stream, there was a cave. This cave was being used as a meditation place by former Sayadawgye:s. When this cave was closed the sound of water could hardly be heard. It became a separate world in itself. Silence reigned supreme in this place. The best place to practise meditation.

U Thu Za-na considered that since he took refuge under Sayadawgye:s' patronage, he should follow their path. He will practise *Vipassana* (meditation) in this cave.

U Thu Za-na placed an old robe on the mat. The floor was chilled to the bone. He sat in front of the Buddha Statue and meditate. As time passed his left leg began to ache. His right

leg pressed against it. There was intense pain in the left leg. He began to realise sufferings of the body. He kept on meditating concentrating on the pain. As long as he kept on meditation and had concentration the sufferings ceased. The more he concentrated the less became the numbness and pain. He kept on meditating.

He was suffering from arthritis. When he pricked the leg, he felt no pain. He next pierced the leg with a safety pin and a needle. The leg didn't feel any pain. Then finally he cut with razor blade. Still he didn't feel any pain but black-coloured blood spurted from the wound.

U Thu Za-na talked about this to his brother Sayadaw. Sayadaw became worried. He said a friend of his knew something about indigenous medicine. He should get treatment from this indigenous medicine practitioner.

Brother of U Wimala, who lived at Nyaung Waing Village was an indigenous medicine practitioner. U Thu Za-na left Joan Joan Kya Monastery and headed to sea-side village of Nyaung Waing Village, west of Mudon.

He had treatment at Nyaung Waing Village. No improvement being made. He visited from one indigenous medicine practitioner to another. The treatment costed a pair of family draught cattle. At that time he met U Sandimar, a visiting monk from Myeit.

U Sandimar said, "Come with me to Myeit. There's an indigenous medicine practitioner who is an expert in treating arthritis." U Thu Za-na thought it was worth trying.

U Thu Za-na told his decision to his brother Sayadaw. He got consent from his brother Sayadaw and the Presiding Sayadaw.

He left for Myeit, a southern-most town

of the country. U Thu Za-na stayed at Pyinn-nge Monastery, Nauk-le Ward to have treatment.

During his sojourn at the monastery, he happened to read *Pitakas* Myanmar translation. *Pitakas* is a compilation of Buddha's teachings during His 45 years of itinerary (*Vassa*) in central India. U Thu Za-na now realised that *Pahtamabjan* courses are only a fundamental in Buddhist Scriptures. He deeply studied the *Pitakas* Myanmar translation. *Pitakas* Myanmar translation has opened his eyes. He spent the whole period of Buddhist Lent studying *Pitakas* Myanmar translation. There was no improvement in his arthritis. It was his Sayadaw who suggested that he should stop practising *Vipassana* (meditation). But U Thu Za-na determined that he would rather die while keeping meditation. His arthritis became worse. He remembered a conversation between monks when reading *Pitakas* Myanmar translation and

Withokdi Magga — "If one reads *Withokdi Magga* one of the two enlightens will occur". This saying according to *Pitakas* is:

- enlightens like an overturned pot being turned up ;
- enlightens like an oil lamp which dispels darkness;
- enlightens and shows the path to travellers who lost their way in a dense forest.

U Thu Za-na now knew the path to be followed. He would have to spend more time in practising *Vipassana* (meditation) than reading Scriptures. He shall seek refuge in the forests and mountains and live a life of seclusion. He had also given promise to his mother. He remembered what his father had once said. U Thu Za-na returned from Myeit to Mudon. He discussed it with his brother Sayadaw.

"Yes. It is a good decision you will spend more time in practising *Vipassana* (meditation). A true jahan gives his life and soul to *Vipassana*," said Sayadaw.

"I will give my life and soul to *Vipassana* Venerable Sayadaw. I shall lead a life of seclusion in the forests and mountains. With this illness there is no meaning in life. I rather die while practising *Vipassana*."

"*Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu*."

U Thu Za-na requested permission from the Presiding Sayadaw. The Presiding Sayadaw then gave an *Ovadakada*. The Presiding Sayadaw said,

"A jahan (monk) who takes refuge in the forests and mountain, practises *Vipassana* (meditation) and possesses self-control, wielded an immense power, or if not he

would be destroyed. Please bear this in mind."

He paid obeisance to Sayadaws and left Joan Joan Kya Pariyatti Monastery.

He first went to his mother. U Thu Za-na's mother Daw Mai Thin wondered the unexpected arrival of her son.

"How come you are here. I don't expect you at this time of the year," said his mother.

"Yes. This time I come here to request permission from you, da ja ka ma gye:

I am going to seek seclusion in the forests and mountains and practise *Vipassana*."

"Why? Are you not going to study religious scriptures?"

"My health is failing. How can I study scriptures with this state."

"Please. Better get yourself treated first. Ony after you are well-off, then practise *Vipassana* in seclusion."

"I have been getting treatment ever since. Its no use. I will rather die while keeping *Vipassana*."

"Please think it over *ashin hpaja*."

"I had already decided. I am now coming to you *da ja ka ma gye*: to request consent from you."

Daw Mai Thin became helpless and wished her husband U Po Thon would be at her side. It was a great tribulation for her.

Daw Mai Thin was lost in her thought. Then U Tu Za-na made preparations for the life of seclusion to practise an austere regimen to forsake lust.

Chapter II

It was 9 a.m, the 12th Waxing Day of Tabodwe 1334 ME.

The dense forests and high mountains of Myaing-gye: Ngu were shrouded with mist. Streams of sun rays hardly penetrated the morning mist. Than Lwin River flowed serenely at this time of the year. On the other side of the River is a Kawt Karat Island's beach and on the eastern bank is a dense forest of Myaing-gye: Ngu. Even the denizens of the forests seemed to be cowered under the mist. Silence reigned supreme at Myaing-gye: Ngu region.

The region was hardly reached even by local populace. The region was marked "Black Area," for it was under the control of insurgents. Those who gave protection money to the insurgents and sympathizers were free to go about in the region. Except members of the religious

orders, local people were to report to the insurgents if they wanted to go to the area. Only those who got permission were allowed to go to Myaing-gye: Ngu region.

On that misty morning a lone boat was moving against the tide of Than Lwin River. A monk was rowing a boat. It was a strange scene: a Samgha was rowing a boat. There were no helping hands to ferry them to Myaing-gye: Ngu. The villagers were out in the fields. U Thu Za-na sat silently in front while Shin Tay-za Ni-ya rowed the boat.

The little boat glided around the Kawt Karat Island and headed towards Myaing-gye: Ngu. It stands majestically at the distant. It is still, silent and secluded. The little boat glided along the bank. Thick jungle covered all along the banks of Myaing-gye: Ngu. The little boat kept on moving and searching for a landing place. Finally the boat approached the head-

land. Shin Tay-za Ni-ya tied a rope at the nearest tree. With great difficulty U Thu Za-na climbed the steep bank with his personal belongings—a monk's bowl, three robes, a bead and a walking stick. Shin Tay-za Ni-ya pushed him from behind. They kept on struggling until they reached the top. Once they reached the top, they were confronted with dense forest and underbrush. They pushed through the underbrush. After some time, they saw a flat-roofed temporary shed. They saw a man donning a bark-stained robe. When the man saw them, he entered the shed and beat a brass gong three times. The man then welcomed U Thu Za-na and Shin Tay-za Ni-ya. After some time a man donning a yellow robe came down from the yonder hill and greeted U Thu Za-na and Shin Tay-za Ni-ya. He was about 40 years old.

U Thu Za-na paid obeisance to the monk.

"Please I am not a monk, just a hermit, Venerable sir. Pray, may I know your monkhood name", the hermit said.

"My monkhood name is U Thu Za-na".

"And your age, Venerable sir."

"Twenty-four, and four years of monkhood."

"May I know Venerable sir what is your intention of coming here?"

"I come here to live a life of seclusion and to practise *Vipassana*."

"Have you study religious scriptures before?"

"I passed an intermediate class of *Pahtamabjan* Examination and other religious examinations, and had attended the highest class of *Pahtamabjan*. I had read Myanmar translation of *Pitakas*."

"Venerable sir, you have some fundamental knowledge of religious scriptures. Nowadays, most *jahans* interested in studying scriptures, they are not interested in practising *Vipassana*."

"Yes, U *Jathei*. One has one's opinion and interest."

"What I mean is Venerable sir, the study of scriptures and practising of *Vipassana* should go hand in hand. Then only will they reach their goal."

"Since we do not know one's aim and object how can we surmise. And we should also count on his virtue and trait of character."

"How long have you been here U *Jathei*."

"I arrived here this year. To say exactly on the 10th Waning Day of Tazaungmon."

"Could you tell me how you arrive this place U *Jathei*."

"To begin with my layman name is U Maung Win, a native of Kawt-lon Kyun-haik Village. My parents are U San Nyunt and Daw Phwa Shin. I am the third of four offsprings. I was born on the 6th Waning Day of Tazaungmon 1295 ME. A Tuesday-born son. My ordination Sayadaw is Ashin Naga Tay-na-bhivamsa. My monkhood name is U Zawana. I have been practising *Vipassana* ever since. My mentor is Venerable Sayadaw U Theikdi"

I moved to Taung-gye: Taw-ya Monastery in the upper reach of Nay-mein-dara Mountain. I stayed there for a year then moved to Myeit, a southernmost town of Myanmar. I acted as an assistant *Vipassana* teacher for one and a half year. I next moved to Mawlamyaing and stayed at Myede Monastery. The Presiding Sayadaw is my uncle. After

ten years of practising *Vipassana* and with the consent of Taung-lay-lone Sayadaw I left the monkhood and became a hermit. My hermit name is "Maha Aung Bodhi." Since then I have been living in seclusion in the forests and mountains and keeping meditation. Once I met a 70 years old Ah-may Toan at Mee-zaing Mountain. She said I must move to east of Kam-ma Moug at Myaing-gye: Ngu to propagate *Sasana*. I arrived here on the 10th Waning Day of Tazaungmon this year. U Tar Toe, U San Kyi and U Po Thinn constructed a thatch hermitage on top of that yonder hill."

"After morning-meditation I beat the gong 24 times dedicated to the 24 causes of worldly phenomena (*Pahtan*) according to Buddhist Scriptures. Similarly, after night-meditation I beat the gong 37 times

dedicated to the 37 *Bodhipakkhiya dhamma*—the 37 factors associated with attainment of Enlightenment. This morning I heard the gong beats three times. That means something extraordinary has happened here. So I came down here and there I meet you, Venerable sir.”

“Since you have been practising *Vipassana* ever since, I think you know more about *Vipassana*.”

“I know to some extent. But I am still trying hard practising *Vipassana*.”

“In that case please teach me how to practise *Vipassana*. My knowledge of code of conduct of *Vinaya* is very fundamental, and my learning is only from book-knowledge and hearsay.”

“Yes. I will teach you how to keep *Vipassana*.”

From that day U Thu Za-na practised *Vipassana* (meditation) for nine consecutive days. He sent back U Tay-za Ni-ya from Myaing-gye: Ngu.

They walked toward U Jathei hermitage. The hermitage was at the foot of a hill. A ruined Nan Oo Pagoda was at the top of the hill.

As it was a dry season U Thu Za-na did not need to have a monastery. He would practise *Vipassana* (meditation) under a tree like jahans of yore.

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A jahan who practises *Vipassana* throughout his life needs *soon* (alms-food). This, he is not to worry about. He has a monk's bowl. He has to go into the villages accepting offerings of food. He is living a Perfect Livelihood. Also there are trees for a jahan to abide under its canopy.

U Thu Za-na accompanied by U Jathei went to Wah-gyee Wah-ka for accepting alms food. They heard voices of the villagers when they approached the village. U Jathei said,

"Now, Venerable sir, you go around the village and accept offerings of food.

After saying this U Jathei left U Thu Za-na near the village. U Thu Za-na went around the village to accept offerings of food. He is a vegetarian and the alms-food sufficed for a day. U Thu Za-na went round for alms-food to neighbouring villages of Pan-kon and Ma Aei Villages.

At night, under the tutelage of U Jathei U Thu Za-na practised *Vipassana* (meditation). He prayed to the Exalted Buddha and dispensed Metta.

U Jathei then showed the comfortable postures of practising *Vipassana* and the breathing method.

"A good posture is to sit with your back straight, legs folded, hands nestle in the laps and eyes not too close nor too open. Focussed your attention on the in and out movement of your breath. This can be done by counting the breaths. There are three postures in addition to sitting. They are lying, standing and walking slowly while focussing your attention on breathing."

When this is done, certain problems and difficulties will arise. You might experience irritating itches on the body or discomfort with the knees or legs. If this happens, try to keep the body relaxed without moving and keep focussing on the breath. You will probably have many intruding thoughts coming into your mind and distracting your attention from the breath. The only way you can deal with

this problem is to patiently keep returning your attention to the in and out movement of the breath. If you keep doing this, eventually thoughts will weaken, your concentration will become stronger and you will have moments of deep mental calm and inner peace."

U Thu Za-na kept on practising *Vipassana* and eventually his concentration becomes stronger. His best posture of meditation is walking slowly while keeping awareness of the breathing.

When his whole body became numbed and felt excruciating pain in the leg, he relaxed and kept concentrating on the pain. He kept awareness on the pain. His concentration became stronger and deep mental calm and inner peace prevailed.

He kept a time-table for practising *Vipassana*.

U Jathei could not spend more time in practising *Vipassana*. He was a fortune teller, an indigenous medicines practitioner, inscriber of charms, amulets and cabalistic symbols and he was also an alchemist.

There were about ten yogis at Myaing-gye: Ngu. They attended the daily core and cleared the underbrush of the surrounding area. A *dama joun* was on the north of Nan Oo Pagoda. There were also some women yogis in the group.

Myaing-gye: Ngu meditation centre was still and silent. Only the sound of squirrels and birds could be heard. The forest too was still, silent and secluded. A herd of wild boar roamed nearby. These wild boars never attacked the yogis. The power of Metta towards all beings kept out of the danger. Myaing-gye: Ngu seemed unearthly and insubstantial. A paradise on earth.

In the evening U Thu Za-na and U Jathei discussed about religious scriptures. He tried keeping less talk. Among the yogis, there were young women 18 to 20 years old. A warning was issued that, no women were allowed to go to the monasteries, without accompanied by man yogi.

U Thu Za-na spent the whole day at Nan Oo Pagoda and meditated. The place was in the midst of thick jungle. Tall trees stood like sentinels and the ground thick with underbrush—still, silent and secluded. He meditated for nine consecutive days. His concentration was stronger than before and had moment of deep mental calm and inner peace.

U Thu Za-na was only 24 years old now and four years of *Vassas*.

U Thu Za-na made up his mind that he will continue practising *Vipassana* at this

place. But he had some work to do. He went back to Mya Thein Tan Monastery in Mudon. He donated all his belongings, except a monk's bowl and three robes. And then he set out for Myaing-gye: Ngu.

Chapter III

A small monastery was constructed near U Jathei hermitage. A thatch-roof hut with *in* leaves walling and sand floor.

Ah-May Toan went to Hpa-an to look after her sick daughter. Most yogis were also absent at Myaing-gye: Ngu. Only two or three yogis left and among them was a young woman.

U Thu Za-na was not well at that time, nevertheless, he went round for alms-food. When he came back to monastery he saw his brother Maung Maung Kyi with durian fruits.

"Mother sent the fruits for you Venerable sir."

"How is da ja ka ma gye: Is she well?"

"Yes. Mother is well, Venerable sir."

After eating the fruit, U Thu Za-na suddenly fell ill. Maung Maung Kyi was fright-

ened and not knowing what to do. He nursed his brother Sayadaw as best as he could. But U Thu Za-na was worried about his brother, for it will soon be dark.

"Maung Maung Kyi, go back home. It will soon be dark."

"Why, Venerable sir, you are alone and sick."

"Don't worry about me. I have been living alone for years."

"But, but, Venerable sir, you are sick now."

"Its nothing. Go home and don't tell da ja ka ma gye: that I am sick. If you tell her, I'll box you in the face."

Maung Maung Kyi was afraid of his brother and went hurriedly out of the monastery. When he reached home he told his mother that U Thu Za-na was ill. Daw Mai Thin told Maung Maung Kyi, to go along with her to

Myaing-gye: Ngu. Maung Maung Kyi did not accompany his mother for he was afraid of U Thu Za-na.

Alone, Daw Mai Thin, taking some household medicines with her, rowed a small boat braving the winds and waves of Than Lwin River and heading towards Myaing-gye: Ngu.

U Thu Za-na felt a little better. He covered himself with the robe from head to toe and meditated. He heard foot steps at the door. When he saw his mother, U Thu Za-na said;

"Why do you come here da ja ka ma gye?"

"I come here to look after you. You are sick. Aren't you?"

His heart rent apart. How, she, alone facing the winds and waves had crossed the Than Lwin River in a small boat. A mother's love to her child.

"Go home, da ja ka ma gye: It will soon be dark."

"No. I will stay here tonight."

"No. No. Da ja ka ma gye: even though you were my mother, a woman cannot stay with jahan under the same roof."

"Yes, I know very well about this. But I'll be staying down there for the night."

Daw Mai Thin sat silently and recited *Paritta*. After some time she heard a gentle foot steps surreptitiously approaching them. Her heart throbbed when she saw a young woman silently approached near U Thu Za-na. She learned that no woman must come to the monastery alone. Is she a human being, an evil spirit or the custodian spirit of a treasure trove? She crouched at the corner and observed the situation.

"Ah-ko, Are you asleep?"

"Who's there?"

"Your sister, Ah-ko, Ma—."

"Whose sister. I have no sister. All are dead. Go away. Don't come near me."

"Please. Don't say like that Ah-ko. I want to be near you. I got a chance only now."

"What are you doing here. Go away. Don't you understand that no woman must come to this place?"

"I venture to come to this place because I love you, Ah-ko, we were.....in previous existence."

So saying, she sat decorously besides U Thu Za-na and began massaged his legs. Daw Mai Thin eyes widened. She stayed silent for a while. She had heard that, there were evil spirits roaming at Myaing-gye: Ngu. But she was a human being. Now only Daw Mai Thin came to know the true nature of that young woman.

"You, young woman, you know very well that no woman must touch jahan"

The young woman became dumbfounded, for she thought that there were none, except she and the jahan.

"I am the mother of U Thu Za-na. Even though I am the mother of that jahan, I don't touch him. You see I just sitting at that corner."

The young woman, on hearing Daw Mai Thin's words, was ashamed and fled.

"Venerable sir. Who is that young woman."

"Leave the matter, da ja ka ma gye: you have no suspicion on me, don't you?"

"No. Venerable sir, I have no suspicion on you."

"If so, da ja ka ma gye: please drop the matter here."

U Thu Za-na was soaked with sweat and he became much better now. He thanked his mother's presence at that moment. If she were not here at that moment he dared not think of any further.

He shivered,

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U Thu Za-na continued practising the austere regimen to forsake lust. His best posture of meditation is standing. When he feels sleepy, he leaned against something. The whole night, U Thu Za-na meditated at Nan Oo Pagoda. He in turn kept the four aspects of deportment ie. reclining, sitting, standing and walking.

The dawn was still, silent and secluded. A crescent moon was now in the east. A footpath leading to Nan Oo Pagoda was dimly visible. A young woman was seen walking along the footpath. She saw a man standing near the hut. She surreptitiously approached the hut and reconnoitred.

She saw the man entered into the hut. She briskly walked towards Nan Oo Pagoda. She saw him meditating. With soft foot she approached near him.

U Thu Za-na thought it was the foot steps of U Jathei. It was the habit of U Jathei

to watch him closely how he had fared in meditation. The footsteps came nearer and nearer until it stopped in front of him. She sat decorously in front of U Thu Za-na. She was the same young woman U Thu Za-na had met last night. It sent a cold shiver through him when he thought of it.

"Ah-ko, Ah-ko."

He did not reply.

"Your sister calling. Aren't you hear."

Again he sat silent.

When she got no reply, she began to massage U Thu Za-na's legs. He was dazed. He lost control of himself and was in a state of ecstasy in sensual pleasure.

"Ah-ko and I were brother and sister in the previous existence. Though we were born at different places, fate has led us to meet again."

The young woman mumbled persistently and eagerly.

He was trembling from head to foot. He took control of himself and asked.

"Am I not a jahan? Haven't I taken refuge in the forest and kept *Vipassana* to free myself from bondage? Will I allow myself like a draught cattle which was being led by a nose-ring rope?"

As if he had been awakened from a dreadful dream, U Thu Za-na stood up and turned his back and walked out.

From that day, he was cautious and guarded himself.

U Thu Za-na practised *Vipassana* day and night until his body was reduced to a mere skeleton. He was pale and his eyes were sunk in the sockets.

It was in the middle of the day. U Jathei and U Thu Za-na were practising *Vipassana* in their monasteries. U Thu Za-na's concentration became stronger and deep mental calm and inner peace prevailed. Suddenly darkness began to envelop him. He looked into the dark void and lo! he saw a tiny luminous point in the darkness. Incandescent but cool. The point grew bigger and bigger until it became the size of a moon. Then it disappeared. A black void again enveloped him, and he saw a tiny luminous point again which grew bigger and bigger until it became the size of a dining table. And U Thu Za-na was in a state of mental calm and inner peace.

U Thu Za-na saw a young woman of about 30, standing at the door. She was well dressed. She came near to U Thu Za-na and said;

"Venerable sir, you are still young, why not become a layperson. I will look after you and treat your arthritis.

U Thu Za-na did not reply.

"Don't you believe me. I have means to look after you"

U Thu Za-na remained silent. The young woman thought that remaining silent means U Thu Za-na had accepted her proposal. She then began to disrobe him. Suddenly U Thu Za-na stood up and the young woman jumped back. U Thu Za-na put all his strength and kicked the woman's neck. The head rolled over and blood splashed all over her body. U Thu Za-na pushed back the headless body. Then he looked at himself. He was not disrobed. He still saw the headless body in his mind. Was it a dream? He was vexed by the phenomenon.

At night U Thu Za-na discussed this with U Jathei. U Jathei said it was nature's test against one's power whether one can resist temptation or not.

U Thu Za-na now had more confidence on his self-control.

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When U Thu Za-na was meditating *Vipassana* in a walking posture along the corridor, he heard someone beat the ground.

"Tat. Tat. Tat."

He saw two red-eyes in the dark at the end of the corridor. He at once knew that, it was a tiger. The sound was the beating of its tail against the ground. U Thu Za-na kept awareness on the in and out movement of the breath, while walking along the corridor. The tiger somersaulted as he approached. He saw another tiger at the other end of the corridor. He steeled himself and kept on walking meditating. When U Thu Za-na reached the middle of the corridor, he saw a third tiger coming out of the bamboo grove. Its tail beat in unison.

Fear gripped him. Finally U Thu Za-na decided to asseverate the truth:

"I was being seduced by two young women whether I can resist the temptation or not. I have kept the precept. What I am asseverating is truth, nothing but the truth, may I be free from this danger."

While keeping meditation U Thu Za-na walked along the corridor. When he reached near them the three animals somersaulted and disappeared into the darkness.

U Thu Za-na went to Nan Oo Pagoda and prayed the Exalted One, and dispensed Metta and he then beat the brass gong. It was 4 a.m. U Thu Za-na went to the village to accept offerings of alms-food.

A conversation between U Jathei and U Thu Za-na was focussed on the disease—arthritis. U Jathei said, if U Thu Za-na could undertake the difficult practice of *dhura* for seven consecutive days, which no ordinary

person can undertake, his arthritis would surely be cured. U Thu Za-na knew the kind of difficult *dhura*. He must temper his body before undertaking the *dhura*. The *jahan* who undertakes the difficult practice of *dhura* has to abstain not only alms-food but also the drinking water and keeps awake for seven consecutive days and nights, with a standing posture only while keeping *Vipassana*.

U Thu Za-na was ready to practise the *dhura*, that no ordinary person can undertake.

He well remembered the day:

Time: 7 am.

Date: 8th Waxing Day of Kason, 1335

ME.

U Thu Za-na's best posture of meditation was a standing posture. For three hours he kept concentrating physical discomfort and feeling indifferent to pain by awareness of the

pain itself. His legs felt as if it were thrust with a burning faggot. He kept awareness on the pain. Both his legs were burning hot. The pain was excruciated. Then his knees began to tremble. He kept awareness on the trembling knees. U Thu Za-na concentrated on the pain. It was nearly mid-night. He kept patiently concentrating the pain. His concentration became stronger and moments of deep calm and inner peace prevailed. For twenty-four hours U Thu Za-na was standing and kept focussing attention on the pain. In his deep calm and inner peace U Thu Za-na felt something was in the circulating of the blood. The thing was moving from the toe till it reached the head. It repeatedly moving up and down from head to toe. He concentrated on the thing. It was 4 a.m. U Thu Za-na felt the thing was coming down the left leg and departed from the left toe.

U Thu Za-na heard the sound of beating hollowed log from the monastery. He then took

respite for the day's meditation.

He noted that something departed from the left toe and wanted to investigate it. He pricked his thigh. He felt the pain.

"Now my arthritis is cured." He was happy that this chronic disease had been cured.

He went to Nan Oo Pagoda and prayed the Exalted One and dispensed Metta.

He kept on continuing *Vipassana Bhavana*.

After offering alms-food to the Exalted One, U Thu Za-na kept meditation in front of the shrine. He concentrated the in and out movement of the breath. After sometime he heard something slithered near him. Then he saw the head of the boa constrictor. He concentrated on his breathing. The boa slithered towards U Thu Za-na. It began to wind U Thu Za-na's body. He remained quietly and tried

keeping the in and out movement of the breath. The boa remained still also. U Thu Za-na kept focussing his attention on his breath. But his whole body was soaked with sweat. Slowly, the boa constrictor began to unwind its reptilian body and left him.

Fever had left U Thu Za-na and he was feeling better than ever. From that day U Thu Za-na was not tormented by arthritis and fever.

Chapter IV

Beginning on the 1st Waning Day of Thadinkyut, 1346 ME U Thu Za-na set out an itinerary to the wilderness throughout the country to pay obeisance to zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas. And another reason of this itinerary was to practise *Asubhadassana dhura* (to perceive the repulsive and transitory nature of the body—khanda).

U Thu Za-na took refuge at cemeteries during his itinerary at towns and villages. He contemplated and meditated on an entombed corpse, the dead body is the object of meditation. The corpse enables him to perceive the repulsive and transitory nature of the khanda (body); to enable him to abandon attachment to the khanda; and to enable him to comprehend the significance of reflections on loathsomeness of the body as the subject of meditation.

U Thu Za-na after arriving at a certain town and village, set out to the nearest cemetery. He sat on the tomb and contemplated the *asubhadassana Bhavana* or practised *Vipassana Bhavana*.

U Thu Za-na, after completion of itinerary returned to Myaing-gye: Ngu, after constructing a Naung-daw gye: Pagoda at the north-east of Nan Oo Pagoda. He began to collect construction materials for re-construction of ruined Nan Oo Pagoda.

The date for laying of the foundation stone was set on the morning of 14th Waxing Day of Nattaw 1337 ME.

The Samghas, Samaneras and lay devotees were busy carrying bricks and cement for the foundation. At the auspicious hour of 8 am. the foundation stones were successfully laid. The Samghas then administered the Five Pre-

cepts to the congregation and recited *Paritta*, and then meritorious deeds shared. The sound of brass gongs reverberated throughout the mountains and forests of Myaing-gye: Ngu.

Then, hell broke loose on Myaing-gye: Ngu area. The chatter of emmagee (MG) and explosion of mortar bombs reverberated throughout Myaing-gye: Ngu. Shrapnels ripped branches and trees uprooted. Stray bullets, like angry wasps, flying from every direction. But U Thu Zan-na, U Jathei, Samghas and lay devotees kept on carrying bricks and cement without paying heed to the din of the battle.

A pitch battle raged between the Government troops and Kawthoolai army at Ohndaw Village in Kam-ma Moun area. Gun fire and explosions of mortar bombs and blazing houses could be seen from Myaing-gye: Ngu.

To have peace and tranquillity in the area an ancient pagoda on the bank of Than

Lwin River was re-constructed. The ceremony for hoisting of *Hti-daw* was held in Kason. The name of the Pagoda is "Yan-pyay Pagoda".

The ceremony for hoisting of *Hti-daw* of Nan Oo Pagoda was held on the 2nd Waxing Day of Kason 1338 ME—the New Year of Myanmar Era. Over 20,000 people from villages far and near attended the ceremony.

U Thu Za-na has been at Myaing-gye: Ngu for eight years with 12 years of monkhood (*Vassas*). Monasteries, and religious edifices were well attended. The number of Samghas, and Samaneras were increasing. This was partly due to young people who were dodging the conscription.

Now, U Thu Za-na became a Presiding Sayadaw of Myaing-gye: Ngu Taw-ya Monastery.

U Kyaw Dee Dee and his wife Daw Nyein Khin donated a monastery at Myaing-gye:

Ngu. A 10-day non-stop recitation of *Pahtan* will be held on the 4th Waxing Day of Tabodwe, 1345 ME. U Thu Za-na requested the Government troops and Kawthoolai not to enter Myaing-gye: Ngu area during the recitation of *Pahtan*. The two sides complied the request.

It was on the eve of *Pahtan* recitation, U Thu Za-na coughed and then vomited with blood. He vomited two spittoon-full of blood and became very weak. It was nearly mid-night. He called U Sanda, leader of the *Pahtan* recitation group to his side and said,

"Venerable sir, I am indebted to you for leading the recitation of *Pahtan*, which has never been held in Myaing-gye: Ngu. Though *Sasana* has been flourished in Myaing-gye: Ngu, some places in Kayin State, which are remote and inaccessible there is need to propagate and perpetuate *Sasana*. I have been in the wildernesses of the State and saw many ruined zedis,

stupas, shrines and pagodas. I felt sad when I saw this ruined religious edifices. And I have been doing the propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana* ever since. I request you, Venerable sir, if I were passed away, please do continue the work of propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana* in this part of the world."

"I assure you, Venerable Sayadaw. I'll do the work of propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana*. Please take rest, Venerable Sayadaw."

U Thu Za-na now had peace of mind.

When U Sanda left, he began to meditate *Vipassana*. Calmness and inner peace prevailed U Thu Za-na. He slept for a while. When he awoke he felt much better.

A non-stop ten days recitation of *Pahtan* was successfully concluded on the Full Moon Day of Tabodwe, 1345 ME.

U Thu Za-na embarked on the first step for the propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana* in remote and inaccessible areas of Kayin State.

U Thu Za-na was tired and sick after the *Pahtan* recitation ceremony. He would go to Mee-zaing Mountain and meditate *Vipassana* for 49 days. He painfully continued the journey until he reached Kwin Da-la Monastery. He found the Presiding Sayadaw ill and bed-ridden. In a few days, the Presiding Sayadaw passed away. He continued his journey to Mee-zaing Mountain.

He would meditate *Vipassana* for 49 days. His resolution: to take only the drinking water during meditation period. He filled his alms-bowl with water from "Theik-di Lake" which is near San-daw Pagoda.

After 18th day, he felt he was not hungry at all. On the 27th day he felt an excruciation pain at the temple. He dared not even wink his

eyes for fear of pain. He was now a mere skeleton with sunken eyes. His feature also was in a state of haggard. On the 40th day, he felt no sensation at all.

U Thu Za-na successfully completed meditating *Vipassana* for 49 days. He painfully had to nurture his strength by consuming first a rice congee, then rice gruel and finally *soon* (alms-food).

He spent another ten months on the mountain continuing meditating *Vipassana*.

During his sojourn at Mee-zaing Mountain, U Thu Za-na contemplated what his future task will be. He has seen ruined religious edifices in the wildernesses of Kayin State, the sound of gun fire—the killing and destruction of towns and villages; people who have no time to pay obeisance to pagodas and attend monasteries and people who cannot earn their livelihood peacefully.

He wants to fulfil all this. He wants to reconstruct these ruined religious edifices in the wildernesses of Kayin State, propagate and perpetuate *Sasana*. Now he was very weak and feeble. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Daw Aye Than of Kam-ma Mounng arrived at Mee-zaing Mountain and informed U Thu Za-na that Presiding Sayadaw of Upper Sanctuary Monastery, Mawlamyaing, was ill. Sayadaw had supplicated U Thu Za-na to come to the Monastery immediately.

U Thu Za-na left for Mawlamyaing. On arrival at the Monastery, he found the Sayadaw hale and healthy. U Thu Za-na then knew it was Sayadaw's pretext to have U Thu Za-na come to him. Sayadaw said,

"Venerable sir, I heard you have been afflicted with tuberculosis, and even vomit with blood."

"Its all over now, Venerable Sayadaw."

"You have decided to undertake the work of propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana* in Kayin State. Have you not?"

"Yes, Venerable Sayadaw. But I am now very weak and feeble, and this cough."

"Venerable sir. Get yourself treated. Only when you are well, you can undertake the task of propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana* in Kayin State."

U Thu Za-na contemplated that how would he undertake for the flourishing of *Sasana* in this state. He felt doubt whether or not he had been practising the extreme type of practice—*attakilamatha*—giving himself up to self-castigation?

U Thu Za-na get himself treated during the rains retreat (period of Buddhist lent)—*Vassas*. at Upper Sanctuary Monastery. His

disease cured and well rested, then U Thu Za-na went back to Myaing-gye: Ngu.

U Thu Za-na found that the task of flourishing of *Sasana* in Kayin State will take time. Even when one wants to undertake a religious function one has to report the matter to both sides. People have been living in a state of alarm.

U Thu Za-na surveyed the surrounding area. He saw a ruined building enclosed by four brick fences. The fences were collapsed and the building lost amid the bambo groves and underbrush. He painfully cleared the jungle until he found the demarcation stone pillars. U Thu Za-na at once knew that it was an ordination hall—*Sima*, in which Samghas are ordained and monastic precepts heard and recite the prescribed texts of *Kammavaca*.

U Thu Za-na had already collected construction materials for the building of an

ordination hall. But the construction materials were not enough for building of an ordination hall. He needed money for the purpose.

It was in the evening, when U Thu Za-na and Samaneras went to the river for bath. When they reached the riverside, a small boat was seen approaching towards them. A half-naked man rowed the boat. The boat berthed near them and a man embarked. He was carrying a four gallons can on his shoulder. When he saw U Thu Za-na he put down the can and paid obeisance. The man said,

"Venerable Sayadaw. Please accept my donation of seasoning powder."

"Yes, Da ja ka gye: I'll accept your donation. Lets pour consecration water for your donation."

The man then took a bomboo bale from the boat and filled it with water. The consecra-

tion ceremony was held on the sand bank of the river. The donor then left the place.

When they arrived at the monastery, the seasoning powder can was put in the store-room.

Shin Nanda, a Samanera was preparing a dawn *soon*. He opened the can to fetch some seasoning powder. He took out a packet of seasoning powder. The packet was wrapped in a plastic bag. Shin Nanda cut open the packet. His eyes were wide open when he saw packets of currency notes. Shin Nanda immediately supplicated the matter to U Thu Za-na. He told the Samanera to bring the seasoning powder can and opened it. Packets of currency notes were neatly packed and placed in the can. It was filled to the brim.

U Thu Za-na sent Samaneras to Kawt Karat Island and made inquiry about the man. But no trace of the man being found. U Thu

Za-na made inquiries at other places. But it was of no avail. Finally U Thu Za-na gave up and decided to use the money for the construction of the ordination hall.

U Thu Za-na began the construction work of the ordination hall. The construction was completed on the Full Moon Day of Tabaung, 1347 ME. Ancient Buddha Images were being consecrated in the ordination hall.

The consecration ceremony was held on the 12th Waning Day of Nattaw, 1348 ME. It was attended by Mai-boung Sarthintike Presiding Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Eindiya Maha Thera of Hpa-an, and seventy laypersons were ordained to monkhood. The name of the ordination hall is "Mingala Ordination Hall".

The consecration ceremony was well attended by villagers from far and near.

Chapter V

Sayadaw U Thu Za-na has constructed seven pagodas:

- "Zi-na Man-pyay Pagoda", on the eastern bank of Than Lwin River, Noh Hta Village. *Hti* hoisting ceremony was held on the 12th Waning Day of Pyatho, 1348 ME;
- "Theikdi Pala Sandaw Shin Pagoda", Tri-kyo Mountain, *Hti* hoisting ceremony was held on the 5th Waning Day of Thadinkyut, 1349 ME;
- "Mya Phone Yaung Pagoda". Myaing-gye: Ngu. *Hti* hoisting ceremony was held on the 1st Waxing Day of Waso, 1349 ME;
- "Mya Phone Khaung Pagoda", Myaing-gye: Ngu. *Hti* hoisting ceremony was held on the 8th Waxing Day of Tagu, 1350 ME;

- "Sanda Pala Pagoda", near Palaik Village, Hpa-pon Township, *Hti* hoisting ceremony was held on the 12th Waxing Day of Kason, 1350 ME;
- "Man-la Yu Pagoda", near Ma Aei Village, Hlaing-bwe Township. *Hti* hoisting ceremony was held on the 7th Waning Day of Kason, 1350 ME; and
- "Thi-la Par-ya Pagoda", near Kawt Lon Kwei (Yun-salin Chaung), Hpa-pon Township. *Hti* hoisting ceremony was held on the 3rd Waxing Day of Waso, 1350 ME.

U Thu Za-na needed some galvanized iron sheets for the roofing of Mya Phone Khaung Pagoda's Tazaung. He left Myaing-gye: Ngu by outboard motor to Taw-lai Hta Village. On the way, he stopped at Mai-ya Hta gate at the foot of Mai-ka Zawt Mountain. He learned that a ruined pagoda—Da-tha Ba-la Sandaw

Shin Pagoda is at the top of the mountain. He wanted to pay obeisance to the Pagoda. Together with U Bi Lone, a Buddhist, and Phar Nu, a Christian, U Thu Za-na set out for the Mai-ka Zawt Mountain. After paying obeisance to Da-tha Ba-la Pagoda, U Thu Za-na went around the Pagoda. He saw plasters of the Pagoda were peeled off and the underbrush encroached the Pagoda's platform and the four lion statues were headless. U Thu Za-na felt sad when he saw the conditions of the Pagoda. U Thu Za-na then made an asseveration: "If I were the person who is destined to reconstruct the Da-tha Ba-la Zedi, may my beads be hang on to the *Hti* of the Pagoda." He threw the bead towards the *Hti*. The beads hang on to the *Hti*. U Thu Za-na was glad that one day he would come to this place and re-built the Da-tha Ba-la Pagoda.

Villagers of Taw-lai Hta donated 300

galvanized iron sheets for the roofing of Mya Phone Khaung Pagoda's Tazaung. U Thu Za-na arrived back at Myaing-gye: Ngu on the 3rd Full Moon Day of Tazaungmon, 1350 ME.

13th Waning Day of Tazaungmon, 1350ME.

Sayadaw U Thu Za-na, U Tun Shin, U Ohn Sein, Maung Ngwe and five women devotees headed by Daw Aye Than (Kam-ma Moun), Daw Nyein Khin (Kawt Karat Island) were set out to Mai-ka Zawt Mountain to rebuild the ruined Da-tha Ba-la Sandaw Shin Pagoda. They brought with them parts of *Hti-daw*, masonry tools and construction materials. They left Myaing-gye: Ngu by outboard motor.

When they embarked from the boat they saw the terrain began to rise gradually. Dense forests on either side of the footpath. They crossed mountain streams and deep valleys.

Sometimes the group had to climb steep mountain sides, like monkeys. U Thu Za-na was not wearing slippers. He walked bare foot. It was strange to see U Thu Za-na feet were not even pierced by a single thorn. They passed through a mile of teak forest and underbrush.

They reached Mai-ya Hta gate at 8 pm. They rested for a while at U Bi Lone's house. Then they set out for Mai-ka Zawt Mountain. The group began to climb the mountain in the dark. They pushed on clearing the underbrush as they went. Finally they reached the top. No sooner than they reached the top, they began to recite *Pahtan* and dispensed Metta. Suddenly Sayadaw U Thu Za-na was struck down with fever. He was in a delirium.

When day break, the devotees were divided into three groups. Each group assigned to a particular work to do. Some carrying

cement and others collecting construction materials.

A group of Kayin arrived at the Pagoda. When they saw Sayadaw U Thu Za-na struck down with fever, they began to make preparation for observing a traditional rites. The ceremony continued for two consecutive days. It was strange that the fever had left U Thu Za-na. They began constructing the Pagoda. The original height of the Pagoda was 16 ft and it was raised to 25 ft.

One day, while walking along the mountainside U Thu Za-na saw a cave at the nearby hill. He became interested in it. He went inside the cave and investigate it. He saw a teak chest. The teak chest was hollowed out of a teak log. He brought the chest out of the cave and opened it. U Thu Za-na found palm leaf manuscripts. Whatever it was, the palm leaf manuscripts are valuable relics, he thought. U

Thu Za-na wondered, who were they that had brought the palm leaf manuscripts to this remote and inaccessible place?

U Thu Za-na brought the palm leaf manuscripts and enshrined in the Pagoda.

It was 3 p.m on the 8th Waxing Day of Nattaw, 1350 ME.

A long line of Samghas and lay devotees were carrying sand bags on their shoulders and heading toward Mai-ka Zawt Mountain. The sand bags were for the construction of Da-tha Ba-la Sandaw Shin Pagoda. Sayadaw U Thu Za-na, who had also carried a sand bag on his shoulder was leading the group. Their bodies were soaked with sweat. When they reached the middle of the forest, the group stopped to take some rest. They put down the sand bags and sat on it. Some looking toward the mountain and other at the surrounding area. When their

eyes set on the boulder near the mountainside their bodies froze and petrified. They saw a tiger sat haunch back on the boulder. The bright yellow and black stripes against the background of green was a graceful thing to look at. It sat majestically on the boulder with no menace at all. It just looked at them.

U Thu Za-na took control of the situation and told the group to remain silent and to dispense Metta towards the tiger. U Thu Za-na, while dispensing Metta, prepared to make asseveration. He concentrated and focussed attention on the tiger and said: "We have been abstaining from eating meat. We come to this place for the propagation of *Sasana*. If it were the truth may you leave us alone".

The tiger left the place and sat haunch back on another boulder.

U Thu Za-na said, "Venerable sir, keep going and dispense Metta and I will lead you".

U Thu Za-na carried the sand bag on his shoulder and led the group. The tiger still sat haunch back and looked at them. The group filed in front of the tiger.

They arrived at the taro grove. Wild boars were noisily digging the rootstock of the taro plants with their snouts. Wild boars are ferocious animals and are noted to be more dangerous than the tigers. The group quietly dispensed Metta and went peacefully towards the Mai-ka Zawt Mountain.

It took 38 days to build the Da-tha Ba-la Sandaw Shin Pagoda, Mai-ka Zawt Mountain, and the *Hti* was hoisted on the 8th Waxing Day of Pyatho, 1,50 ME.

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Sayadaw U Thu Za-na and Samghas held *Pahtan* recitation ceremony at Taw-lai Hta and Mei-khaung Kay Villages.

On the return journey to Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw U Thu Za-na decided they would float down the Than Lwin River by a raft. They made a double bamboo raft. The current is too strong at some places and there are coral reef in the middle of the river. Only a double bamboo raft could withstand the hazards.

Thu Mwai Hta Camp is at the confluence of Than Lwin River and Thoung Yin River. It is on Myanmar side, and on the other side is Thailand. When the raft was near the Thu Mwai Hta Camp, the rafters tried to approach the Camp. But the raft headed towards the other bank. The rafters tried to bring back the raft to Myanmar side. They tried hard to approach Thu Mwai Hta Camp. The raft did not float down the river, instead it suddenly halted and floated to and fro, from bank to bank.

It was a strange phenomenon, thought Sayadaw U Thu Za-na. He was perplexed and

then he faced towards Thu Mwai Hta Hill and called upon the deity to bear witness that he (U Thu Za-na) would build a pagoda at Thu Mwai Hta once they were freed from this strange phenomenon. As soon as he finished asseveration, the raft floated down the river. He noted down the place and he would one day come to this place and build a pagoda.

The raft berthed not far from Hup-gye: Water Fall. The people would embark here and the raft only would float down the Water Fall, for it was impossible to go down the Water Fall with the people riding on it.

When day break they carried their belongings to Hup-mee—a down river place and wait for the raft.

Rafters U Shwe Lone, Kyawt Khaw and Pha Thet tied the raft with strong ropes and let the raft floated down the Hup-gye: Water Fall. The raft dropped from the Fall. The eight rafters

who waited below the Fall swam to the raft. They embarked on the raft and rowed with all their strength to free themselves out of the whirlpools. The rafters were now tired out. The raft then sunk in the whirlpools with the rafters riding on it.

One Pha Mout-soe who was on the bank placed a quid of betel on the boulder and offered it to the deity. Whether it was coincidence or not the little raft was out of the whirlpools. Then it floated down the river.

The raft finally berthed at Hup-mee. Then Sayadaw U Thu Za-na and party loaded their belongings on the raft and floated down the Than Lwin River.

The raft was now approaching Oh-lo Hup. The rafters told them to tie their hands on to the raft. The wave at Oh-lo Hup is as big as a small house. The waves swept over the

raft and it went down under the waves. Tying their hands on to the raft had saved their life.

They were now approaching Kywe-gyan. Suddenly the raft headed towards Kywe-gyan reef. The strong current carried the raft towards the reef. And then it grounded sideways on the reef. They disembarked from the raft and pushed it into the water. It was finally afloat in the water and the people jumped on to the raft. Unfortunately some people were left on the reef. Outboard motors from Paya-kyauk Pa-thei Hta came to a rescue. They put the stranded people on the raft and left. The raft continued the downward journey.

Sayadaw U Thu Za-na and party saw the water seethed and whirlpooled as they approached Nga-mei coral reef. Suddenly four outboard motors raced toward them. The boats towed the raft to a safe waterways and left. The raft continued its journey.

The yellow moon sailed across the sky. At a distance, dense forests on either side of the banks were dimly visible. Than Lwin River flowed serenely and its surface as smooth as a mirror.

The raft glided towards Myaing-gye: Ngu. It went past Htet Lu Camp, Ye Lai Htaik, Lauk Mway, Kan Nyi-naung, Weir-gyi and Sakaw-waing and it arrived safely, at Myaing-gye: Ngu at 9 p.m.

Chapter VI

Time : 6:30 a.m

Date : 13th Waxing Day of Tagu, 1351ME.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Samghas left for Thu Mwai Hta Hill for construction of the pagoda. It was to implement Sayadaw's promise that he had once given at the time when their raft was suddenly halted at the middle of Than Lwin River near Thu Mwai Hta Hill.

The helmsmen were U Einda-sara and U May Gi-ga. It was an aberrant way for Buddhist monks at the helm of two outboard motors. The situation was that only monks were allowed to go to the permitted areas. In the light of the circumstances now prevailing, one has to do one's job.

They arrived at Baw-tha Yaw quay at 11 am. U Einda-sara and U May Gi-ga continued their journey to Myaing-gye: Ngu. Sayadaw and party followed the same route to

Mai-ka Zawt Mountain. They arrived at Mai-ya Hta at sun set and slept for the night at U Bi Lone's house. The visitors had to sleep in the open. The night was chilled to the bone, but Samghas were ready to face any hardships and dangers for the propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana*.

The condition at that time was that, except members of the religious orders, all able-bodied were to serve as soldiers in the armed forces of the insurgents.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and party went to Mai-ka Zawt Mountain and paid obeisance to Da-tha Ba-la Sandaw Shin Pagoda. In the afternoon they left for Thu Mwai Hta Hill. No sooner did they arrive at Thu Mwai Hta Hill they choose the site for the construction of pagoda and begin clearing the land.

U Sadaw Ba-tha, leader of the masonry group supplicated to Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw

that some one had asked whether Saydaw got permission to build a pagoda at Thu Mwai Hta, Sayadaw said,

"Tell U Shwe Lone about it. We should go first to Phado Aung San at Hti-thei Khi."

"Yes, Venerable Sayadaw."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and U Shwe Lone went to Phado Aung San at Hti-thei Khi.

When they arrived at Phado Aung San's house, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw said they came here to have a permission for the construction of a pagoda at Thu Mwai Hta Hill. Phado Aung San said,

"I have learned that only kings and queens in the olden days build pagodas and religious edifices. Now I see a jahan is going to build a pagoda. What's the meaning of it."

"That's right, da ja ka gye: In the olden days kings and queens build pagodas and religious edifices, and they are also Buddhists too. Those who are in the responsible positions here issue order not to build pagodas and religious edifices. If we Samghas do not build pagodas and religious edifices, who is going to do it? All right. If we are not permitted to do so, then please permit us to take leave."

Phado Aung San laughed heartily and said,

"Who said, Venerable Sayadaw, that you are not permitted to build a pagoda? Listen Daw Ma Kaing, U Shwe Lone and U Ah-du. We are a close relatives, Sayadaw and I. We can talk frankly and sincerely after all. Go to officer in-charge Kawrit Khoh Naw Tawt of No.20

battalion. Bring a letter from him and I will endorse it."

"That's mean I have to go and get a permission from him."

"Yes, Venerable Sayadaw. That is on that's what I mean."

"Then lets go to No.20 battalion."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Phado Aung San are close relatives. They are first cousin. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw's father U Po Thon and Phado Aung San's father U Hla Baw are brothers. U Po Thon is the eldest brother.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw entered novicehood at the age of eight and had studied up to the highest class of *Pahtamabjan*. Sayadaw is now undertaking the task of propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana*. Reconstructing the ruined pagodas and religious edifices in the wildernesses of Kayin State.

Phado Aung San was educated at Missionary School at Ohn-daw Village and at Queen's College, Mawlamyaing. He served as a government servant for some time at Bar-mei Taung, Hpa-an, and then went underground. His wife is of the other faith. Phado Aung San was a Buddhist. Young Phado Aung San just simply accepted religion as a way of life. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw also learned that he ceased to be a Buddhist.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw sent U Shwe Lone to officer in-charge of No.20 battalion, at Kyauk-nyat, Khee-moo Hta. Officer in-charge Kawrit Khoh Naw Tawt issued a permission. Bo Mya and his adjutant-general recommended the paper.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw went back to Thu Mwai Hta Hill. They began preparation for the construction of the pagoda.

The foundation of the pagoda was laid on the 1st Waning Day of Tagu, 1351 ME. A *Pahtan* recitation was also held on the same day.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw went to Yangon to convey *Hti-daw* for the pagoda. Sayadaw met U Tun Tun and party at Yangon. U Tun Tun requested to Sayadaw that they wanted to visit Myaing-gye: Ngu. Sayadaw brought U Tun Tun and party to Myaing-gye: Ngu. They again requested to Sayadaw that they wanted to visit Thu Mwai Hta. Laypersons were not allowed to enter Thu Mwai Hta. U Tun Tun and party entered monkhood and they went with Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw to Thu Mwai Hta.

When they arrived there the *Pahtan* recitation was in progress. Sayadaw personally took part in the recitation of *Pahtan*.

A group of armed insurgents arrived at the place. One rebel soldier Kway Kyay said to Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw.

"You are only allowed to build a pagoda, but not a monastery."

"Why? If there is a pagoda, there shall also be a monastery."

"Then if you build a monastery, you are not allowed to have a roof."

"Who said this."

"From the higher authority."

So saying Kway Kyay went to the podium where *Pahtan* recitation was held. They talked boisterously among themselves and Kway Kyay pointed at U Khay-mi Ka and asked loudly and insolently.

"What's that. There is no meaning at all. For days and nights you are making

nuisance of yourself howling like dogs. No one can bear it."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw remained silent. Its no use of explaining to them. Venerable Sayadaw just looked at him with compassionate eyes.

* * * * *

Full Moon Day of Kason, 1351 ME.

Saya U Tun Tun was an indigenous medicine practitioner and also a member of Shweyin Kyaw religious sect.

A ceremony to propitiate *nats* (spirits) with offerings was in progress. The ceremony was well attended by people from neighbouring villages. Among them were also rebel soldiers in disguise. Rumours had reached that Tatmadaw columns were at Toe-nyo Phaw Hta.

A commotion broke out. The people took flight. Some went into hiding in the forests and mountains. Others crossed the river and took refuge on Thai side. But recitation of *Pahtan* continued.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw sat silently. The whole place was silent except *Pahtan* recitation.

A Buddhist rebel soldier asked,

"Venerable Sayadaw. Why have you not taken a flight."

"I had already took flight from Myaing-gye: Ngu. Why take another flight."

"Venerable Sayadaw. Will you stop recitation of *Pahtan*?"

"Yes, da ja ka, once *Hti-daw* has been hoisted, it will stop, but not now."

"Venerable sir. Will you recite *Pahtan* without using that loud speaker. With that

loud voice the enemy would soon be here and we will have to shoot."

"Do your duty, da ja ka. It doesn't matter whether I am hit or not. But don't shoot indiscriminately before the column arrived or we all will be dead."

"Venerable Sayadaw, please switch off the light. It can be seen from distance."

"Don't worry da ja ka. There is no need to switch off the light, for lights do open mind. Nothing will happen to you. Keep your mind at peace."

"Venerable sir, because you are building a pagoda on this Hill and if the enemy were ever arrived here, we will have to take action against you."

"Yes, da ja ka. Do your duty but not before the column arrived."

Fortunately the Tatmadaw columns instead of launching attack on Toe-nyo Phaw Hta, it attacked U Thu Ta Camp and set fire to 16 saw mills.

U Tun Tun and party were sent back to Myaing-gye: Ngu. He was suspected as a member of the military intelligence service. It was rumoured that they were going to arrest him in a few days. Whether it was a coincidence or not, no sooner did U Tun Tun arrive at Thu Mwai Hta Tatmadaw columns were presence in the area.

Donations not only from Buddhists but also from other faiths were pouring in for the construction of the pagoda.

The rainy season had arrived. It was already over two months building the pagoda. And the *Pahtan* recitation was heard from the Hill. Some says, monks at Thu Mwai Hta Hill

were making nuisance of themselves. And that loud speaker blaring day and night. No one can bear the sound. When Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw heard this, Sayadaw forgave with compassion and kept on building the pagoda.

Rains drizzled on that day.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw saw three schooners sailing toward Mai-la Hta. Daw Poe Phyu Moe hurriedly walked towards Sayadaw and said,

"Venerable Sayadaw, Tatmadaw columns are at Mai-la Hta Range. We must take flight to Thai side."

"What's then, da ja ka ma gye:"

"Someone says, he heard from W/T that there will be an aerial bombing here very soon."

While they were talking, two rebel soldiers arrived. One of them was Kway Kyay.

He said,

"We want the name list of the monks. We heard from W/T that the enemy planes are going to bomb the place."

"You will get the name list of the monks. Here's a book and a ball pen. But I won't stop recitation of *Pahtan*. Please bear patiently for that."

While compiling the name list, Kway Kyay shouted, "I hear the planes coming."

They all looked at the sky. Four, eight, no nine planes flying along the Thoung Yin River. The planes made bombing run on the rebel positions. They swooped down from the sky and cluster of bombs dropped on the rebel strongholds. Explosions came from Ma Na Palaw. The planes then disappeared into the clouds.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw, Monk U Tun Myint, U Tha Din and Kyawt Khaw went

to Mai-ya Hta by an outboard motor. Monk U Tun Myint and Sayadaw parted at Mai-ya Hta. Monk U Tun Myint was to bring sculptors from Myaint-gye: Ngu to Thu Mwai Hta Hill.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and party continued their journey to Kyay-baw Ka-lo Village. When they were near the village they saw a child. The child, seeing Sayadaw ran away in fright.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw well remembered an accident he had encountered when on a round of alms-food to hill-people in a remote area.

Commotion broke out among the villagers when they saw Sayadaw. Some went hiding and other ran away as fast as their legs could carry. As it was time for morning *soon* (alms-food) Sayadaw ran after them. Sayadaw and the villagers were like playing hide-and-seek.

Fortunately Sayadaw and the villagers have a common language, and there ended the commotion.

The hill-people offered alms-food to Sayadaw. After Sayadaw had finished *soon* he asked why they ran away from him. The villagers said,

"We have been told that men who shaved their heads bald and donning reddish-brown robes are "Than Kha Yar". They are the head hunters. When you see them run for your life or else you will be beheaded."

The Kayin hill-people worshipped *nats* (spirits). Sayadaw explained to the villagers that these yellow-robed men are monks—they are not "Than Kha Yar"—the head hunters.

Sayadaw preached *Dhamma*. The Kayin hill-people became interested in and listened attentively. There was also a question-and-

answer session. But it was not easy to make them understand.

When the Kayin hill-people paid obeisance to Sayadaw, they just sat down, stretched out their legs and raised their palms together on the forehead, much less proper way of squatting or decorously sitting posture. Sayadaw had to show them how to squat properly or sit decorously in paying obeisance to Samghas.

Sayadaw next expounded Buddhism and administered the Five Precepts in a nutshell. For offering of alms-food to Sayadaw, he made consecration water to be poured for the meritorious deeds done. After the consecration water being poured, Sayadaw added that it would be much better if there were a triangular brass gong to beat. Hearing this the man went into the room and brought out a triangular brass gong.

Sayadaw got excited. How come this triangular brass gong is among the *nats* (spirits) worshippers living in this remote place?

The man said, they have two things that had been handed down from generation to generation. These two things were—a triangular brass gong and a vase. For centuries, the brass gong and the vase were lost into oblivion. They didn't know what the two things were meant for.

This gave Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw food for thoughts:

* A triangular brass gong and a vase (in which water and flowers are placed as a religious offering) and the Kayin hill-people who worshipped *nats* (spirits).

Inference can be deduced from that—witnessing Buddhist religious artifacts among the hill-people in this remote area and the ruined zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas in the wildernesses of Kayin State were obvious evidence that Buddhism had once flourished in this part of the world. As millinnium past they were

cut off from the mainland, and were lost into oblivion.

Sayadaw then explained the use of the triangular brass gong and the vase. Sayadaw expounded the fundamental of Buddhism and the role of monks.

After hearing this, the Kayin hill-people came to have the right understanding of Sayadaw U Thu Za-na.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw arrived at da ja ka gye's house and said the reason for coming here.

"Sayadaw has been building the pagoda at Thu Mwai Hta Hill. It was already over two months and still not finished yet. Samghas and Samaneras were ill and tired. I come to you and the villagers to request for contributing voluntary service in building the pagoda. Can you help?"

"Venerable Sayadaw, we are expecting for this. But we haven't got a boat. Its not easy to get to Thu Mwai Hta without having a boat."

"Da ja ka gye: I have a boat here. The volunteers can come with me now."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and volunteers left for Thu Mwai Hta Hill. As soon as they arrived there, they began to carry sand, cement, timber, water and construction materials to the site. It took only three days to clear off the construction materials.

Monk U Tun Myint brought sculptors from Myaing-gye: Ngu. They finished building a pagoda, a two-story monastery and an ordination hall in the face of great hardships and dangers.

The *Hti-daw* hoisting ceremony was held at 9 a.m on the 13th Waxing Day of Waso, 1351 ME.

The name of the Pagoda is "Eik-sa Tha-ya Phaung-daw Oo Pagoda". It means:

Eik-sa Tha-ya — Sufficiently fulfilled one's wishes and goal.

Phaung-daw Oo— Place where Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw's raft halted suddenly at the place where the Pagoda is built—
Thu Mwai Hta Hill.

There will be peace and tranquillity in this part of the world, when enmity and animosity removed and goodwill, benevolence and understanding restored.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has shined the Light of *Dhamma* which had been flickered or extinguished in the past. In the present there is a Light which flames and in future, there will

be Light which will shine all over the Kayin State.

Eik-sa Tha-ya Phaung-daw Oo Pagoda and the religious edifices are Symbols of Peace on Earth and Goodwill Among Men.

The presiding sayadaws of the monastery were U Kun-thain Nya and U Ardi-sa. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Samghas floated down the Than Lwin River with a bamboo raft to Myaing-gye: Ngu.

Chapter VII

Myaing-gye Ngu Sayadaw has built a total of 53 pagodas and 28 ordination halls during eight years, from 1348 ME to 1356 ME.

Sayadaw began preparations to build a pagoda at Hsin-ma Mountain in Kayah State. Due to the prevailing conditions there Sayadaw had to return to Myaing-gye: Ngu.

Sayadaw saw Daw Ma Kaing and U Shwe Lone when he arrived at Myaing-gye: Ngu. Sayadaw asked why Daw Ma Kaing and U Shwe Lone were here. Daw Ma Kaing said,

"Venerable Sayadaw, Bo Mya has sent us to you."

"For what, da ka ma gye:?"

"He wants Sayadaw to come to Ma Na Palaw. He conveys a message with us. He also said if Sayadaw were not coming with us, we don't need to come back."

"Why he wants me. I don't think he wants to honour me. If I were not coming with you then?"

"We dare not go back, Venerable Sayadaw."

"Aw. If it is so, lets go and meet with him now."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw went to Ma Na Palaw via Thu Mwai Hta.

When they meet, Bo Mya said,

"Phone-gyee, stop building pagodas. "

"Why stop building pagodas, Ah-hpo?"

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw called him (Bo Mya) Ah-hpo (Ah-phoo).

"Phone-gyee, what's your aim and object in building pagodas."

"I am building pagodas to have peace in the land just like Ah-hpo is working to

have peace and prosperity for Kayin national."

"Yes, you have been building pagodas for over 20 years to have peace. Well, where is peace then. It's the same as before."

"Ah-hpo has been waging a revolutionary war for over 40 years, fighting for peace and for development of the State. But where is peace and where is development."

"Ha! That's correct."

Bo Mya agreed what Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw said, but he added,

"We are fighting for our cause, our progress, for the betterment of our Kayin national. If it is deemed to fight, we will go on fighting."

"Are you not fighting now, Ah-hpo."

"Of course we are fighting now. We will

go on fighting until we achieve our object."

"Its now well over 40 years. Have you achieved your object?"

"It's not our concern. Our concern only is to keep on fighting until we achieve our object."

"Its the same with me Ah-hpo. You do what you believe in. I also am doing what I believe in. Whether there is peace or no peace that is not my concern. My concern only is to build pagodas—and to have peace."

"You will never have peace by building pagodas. Ah-lan Ta-yar Sayadaw also build pagodas to have peace. A large amount of money have been spent in building pagodas. But there is no peace. What I want to tell you is that—stop building pagodas. That's all"

"If it is so, please permit me to take leave."

Then Sayadaw left for Myaing-gye: Ngu. When Samghas learned about this they were indignant. All the Samghas were determined to continue building the monastery at Thu Mwai Hta Hill. They went there and continued constructing the monastery.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw seriously considered what Bo Mya had said. Bo Mya told Sayadaw not to build pagodas. He didn't say not to build monasteries nor ordination halls. So Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw began building monasteries and ordination halls.

Meanwhile, an encounter with Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and KNU Bo Mya in building of a pagoda at Lay-kaw Ku Mountain is worth mentioning here. The issue was vividly recorded in the diary of 'Warrant Officer' Kyaw Than (presently Bogyoke Kyaw Than of DKBA).

The following are the extracts from the diary of 'Warrant Officer' Kyaw Than.

Diary of Bogyoke Kyaw Than

9-5-93

I saw cement bags and bricks piled up at the quay when I was posted at Mai-la Hta gate. I learned that the cement and bricks were meant for building of a pagoda at Lay-kaw Ku Mountain. I also learned that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is building the pagoda. I have never seen Sayadaw before.

It came to my sense that I have never been to pagodas and monasteries much less given voluntary service in building the pagoda since I have joined the revolution. Now here is a chance. I decided to give voluntary service in building this pagoda. I requested permission from the authority to give voluntary service. My

request was granted. Together with other five yebaws, we carried bricks to the construction site at Lay-kaw Ku Mountain. We saw monks and lay devotees who were contributing voluntary service. We made no acquaintances with them, for our job was just to do meritorious deeds. We came down from the mountain in the evening.

11-5-93

Request permission. Permission being granted. Today we carried cement bags to the site.

12-5-93

Request permission. Permission being granted. We contribute voluntary labour. During meal time, a man came to us and asked who was the leader of yebaws. He added that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw wanted to see the

leader. I went along with him. When I met with Sayadaw, he asked about me. I inquired the reason for calling me.

Sayadaw showed me a piece of paper. I read the paper and it was written—"Stop building pagoda. Remove all construction materials and clear off the mountain before 3 p.m today." It was a W/T message.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw said that he received the W/T message this morning. Sayadaw told me that he wanted to discuss with me. We discussed about it.

I came back to Mai-la Hta in the evening. On the way I met 'Lt.' Kyaw Du of No.20 battalion. I discussed about W/T with him. We went to Mai-la Hta to meet officer in-charge 'Capt' Kyaw Aye (a Christian). Our group now consisted of ten elders from the villages. Poe Hti Khawt was among them.

When we met 'Capt' Kyaw Aye I requested permission to continue building the pagoda. And added that if the pagoda were left and unfinished the blame will be put on the Kawthoolai. For this reason permission must be given for completion of building the pagoda.

The officer in-charge was an understandable man and permission was granted. But one '2nd Lt.' Heathcliff (a Christian) intervened saying we were wrong. It was their concern. He accused us that we were the same as the State Law and Order Restoration Council.

'Capt' Kyaw Aye said he ('2nd Lt' Heathcliff) should not say like that. And people can worship what they believe in. What the '2nd Lt' said would complicate the issue, he added.

I told the officer in-charge that, we came here to request permission. We will come back tomorrow for it.

Then, '2nd Lt' Heathcliff threatened us that if we were brave enough to come down from the mountain he will kill all of us and the corpses would be floated down the Than Lwin River. I got angry and said that he was doing for the good of the people. Is it the way he treated the people like that? I told him in the face that he could not and cannot kill them before killing me first. 'Capt' Kyaw Aye admonished us to stop quarelling among us. He added that the matter was assigned to 'Major' Wah-htai. He will personally sent us to meet the 'Major'.

7 am. 13-5-93

Number 13 is an unlucky number. I was heavy at heart. We left for Mai Pa by hired outboard motor. As soon as I met 'Major' Wah-htai, I requested the 'Major' permission to be granted to continue the construction of the pagoda.

'Major' Wah-htai said he was not obstructing the building of the pagoda. He added that, he was just obeying the orders. The matter was entirely depended on the higher authority. So saying he went to the bedside and took a swig of liquor. He next called over W/T and came back and told us that the leaders were out of the country.

A village elder Poe Hti Khaw and 'Major' Wah-htai were intimate friends. Poe Hti Khaw requested the 'Major' that he could help them and added that we were not doing anything wrong. "Major" Wah-htai got angry and without saying a word kicked Poe Hti Khaw in the front. U Tin Paar (a) U Ah-du said as an officer he shouldn't do like that. U Ah-du said that we came here not to do against him.

The 'Major' said if we all wanted to build a pagoda why not Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw go and meet the leader. He and 'Captain' Kyaw

Aye would personally send-off the Sayadaw. He sarcastically said that if the building of the pagodas would surely bring peace he would withdraw his troops.

I then said, we were building pagodas voluntarily and with goodwill. It doesn't mean that building of pagodas would bring peace.

13-5-93 (Night)

We went to Myaing-gye: Ngu. Stopped for the night at Mau-lo Kho Village.

14-5-93

Arrived at Myaing-gye: Ngu. We told Sayadaw about our meeting with 'Major' Wah-htai. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw said, he didn't want to go to Bo Mya. He (Sayadaw) had met Bo Mya several times. Whenever Bo Mya met

him (Sayadaw) he (Bo Mya) told the same old story again and again—that we disobeyed his order; that we were building pagodas and thus violating his order; that Buddhists are unreliable people; that he (Sayadaw) is an agent of the State Law and Order Restoration Council. Instead Sayadaw requested us that we should go to Ma Na Palaw. I felt sad when I heard Sayadaw's words.

Logically if a Buddhist Sayadaw was accused of an agent of the State Law and Order Restoration Council, what about me? I am a Buddhist too, then I am an agent. Or they suspected me as an agent? This thought came into my mind.

When at arrived Mai-la Hta, 'Lt' Tin Myint of signal corps- told me that he received a W/T message from 'Major' Wah-htai that he (Wah-htai) apologized what had happened at Mai Pa. 'Major' Wha-htai invited Myaing-

gye: Ngu Sayadaw and U Tin Paar to pay a visit to Mai-la Hta.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Samghas arrived Mai-la Hta at 11 a.m to meet 'Major' Wah-htai. But 'Major' Wah-htai was no where to be found.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw continued journey to Thu Mwai Hta.

I also went to Thu Mwai Hta.

15-5-93

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and I waited for 'Major' Wah-htai at Thu Mwai Hta. We waited him till (16-5-93). But he didn't appear.

17-5-93

While passing through Thu Mwai Hta 'Major' Law Wa-di saw people assembled at

Thu Mwai Hta. The KNU headquarters sent an inquiry committee to Thu Mwai Hta to investigate the matter.

Members of the inquiry committee were:

1. Phado Taki Baw (No.1 brigade), Chairman, Thaton District;
2. Phado Aung Shwe (No. 1 brigade), District Treasurer;
3. 'Captain' Rakit;
4. 'Warrant Officer' Maung Nyunt.
5. Saw Kidoe; Officer in-charge, Mai-la Hta Gate.

Inquiry committee investigated why people were assembled at Thu Mwai Hta. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and I explained to the inquiry committee about the affair. After hearing the case, they remarked that Bogyoke Mya should personally attend and give explanation to the people or otherwise there would be an

uprising. The committee said that it would help to get a peaceful solution on it. They went back to headquarters.

6 pm.

'Caption' Rakit and 'Warrant Officer' Maung Nyunt arrived at Thu Mwai Hta. They brought a letter with them. The letter written in Kayin Language stated that—There has been no discrimination of one religion from another. And people have been permitted to worship what they believe in. The letter was signed by headquarters adjutant-general Bilat Pyan Sein on behalf of Bogyoke Mya.

By that time there were over 1000 people assembled at Thu Mwai Hta. I requested Bogyoke Mya should personally announce this before the mass would be occurred. If not who will take responsibility for it? 'Captain' Rakit then said that why not I go and see him

personally.

7 am. 18-5-93

About 70 yebaws in mufti and I went to Ma Na Palaw across the river as point. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw, Myinn Tha-pyey Sayadaw and about 1000 people will follow behind us.

'Captain' Rakit 'Warrant Officer' Maung Nyunt, 'Lt' Taki Baw, Phado Aung Shwe, 'Major' Thura and 'Captain' Kee Pau welcomed us.

They told us to wait for Bogyoke Mya and went out. After some time, they came back and said that Bogyoke Mya was attending the wedding, the other said he was out of the country, some one whispered, no he is here. He avoided to see us. And another said if he were not going to meet the people the situation will be out of control. 'Warrant Officer' Maung

Nyunt said he would try again to find Bogyoke Mya. After ten minutes he came back with Bogyoke Mya.

The people were assembled in the field. I was with Phado Taki Baw and not far from Bogyoke Mya. Bogyoke Mya said,

"Now I am here. Come, all of you. You all are not listening to me. I was myself a Buddhist. I never discriminate one religion from another. I have to issue orders which were submitted by field commanders. The orders are issued for security reason only. Building pagodas and painted coat of white wash serve as targets for the enemy. Once peace attained, you can build as many pagodas as you can."

I raised my voice and said,

"We all are glad to hear this Ah-hpo. But we feel sad when 'Major' Wah-htai per-

sonally assaulted Poe Hti Khaw without any reason at all. We understand that it is another matter when taken under disciplinary measures. When we discussed the affair at Mai-la Hta our life were threatened. This action will bring dissension among the ranks, Ah-hpo."

Bogyoke Mya assured me that action will be taken against '2nd Lt' Heathcliff. He then added he forgave all of us.

U Ah-du requested Bogyoke Mya to oblige in writing. Bogyoke Mya wrote a draft, typed and signed it. It was written in Kayin Language. The letter states:

"There shall be no discrimination against one religion from another. Permission granted to continue building of the pagoda at Lay-kay Ku Mountain. Religion shall not use for furtherance of political end."

We returned to Thu Mwai Hta. At the quay I saw 'Lt' Say Wah taking list of yebaws who were presence at Ma Na Palaw. Some yebaws gave their names, but I did not give my name nor allow my name be taking.

10 pm. 23-5-93

I was sleeping in the store room when 'Captain' Kyaw Aye and 'Sergeant' Chit Than came into the room. 'Captain' Kyaw Aye said, 'Major' Sa Kalai Moo wanted to know who was the leader at the recent affair. I told him that I was the leader and added that I was ready to receive punishment if I were wrong. But at present I was only concerned about the completion of the pagoda at Lay-kaw Ku Mountain. 'Captain' Kyaw Aye said to forgive him and added that he was being ordered to inquire the name of the leader.

11-6-93

'Major' Wah-htai came to see me. I was not able to meet him. He left a message. 'Sergeant' Phar Ait said that, he (Wah-htai) bore no grievances against me.

* * * * *

No. 20 brigade sent organisers to military columns explaining to the soldiers that, there were no discrimination against one religion from another, that there should be no dissension among the ranks because of religion and, that permission being given to Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw for building of pagoda at Lay-kay Ku Mountain.

July 1994

A military column led by 'Major' Kyaw Hmu (a Christian) called a meeting at Mai-la Hta Gate. The 'Major' first explained the military situation in the region. In the course of the meeting he touched upon religious matters. He

said he knew very well that the recent affair was started by 'Major' Wah-htai and 'Major' Kyaw Hare. 'Major' Wah-htai beat up the pilgrims at Mai-ka Zawt Pagoda. On hearing the news 'Major' Kyaw Hare intervened over W/T. 'Major' Wah-htai derogatorily said about Buddhists. 'Major' Kyaw Hare became indignant. They slandered each other religion over W/T. But 'Major' Kyaw Hare dared not stand firm against him because of his weak background. He became resented and considered that Buddhists were being ill-treated and discriminated because of their religion.

'Major' Kyaw Hmu admonished that lesson should be taken from this. Since there were no discrimination of religions, suspicions and grievances should be removed, trust and understanding among the ranks should be restored.

'Lt' Ski said he was in dilemma when

government troops were given voluntary service with civilian devotees in building pagodas. He was apathetic to give order to open fire on the crowd, and requested directive be given in such cases. 'Major' Kyaw Hmu told 'Lt' to hold fire when government troops and civilian devotees were doing meritorious deeds. Attacked only after troops and civilians dispersed.

I understand that 'Major' Kyaw Hmu is a straight forward, broad-minded and fair and square man. A true Christian 'Major' Kyaw Hmu is.

And if there were freedom of worship, non-discrimination of one religion from another and no encroachment on one's right such an affair shall never occur.

Chapter VIII

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has to travel throughout the length and breadth of the country for the propagation and perpetuation of Buddha *Sasana*. According to the prevailing conditions Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has to make friendly relations with personnel from both sides. This made suspicion from both sides. Sayadaw is therefore being watched closely.

This side said Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has connection with the underground. Sayadaw is a Kayin national, and he lives in the area controlled by Kayin revolutionaries. He is free to move at these places, this must be that he made some gives and takes with the insurgents. He came to this side for gathering of information. He is an agent of the rebels. He is to be watched closely.

The other side said he went to Maesok, Thailand, to purchase construction materials for

building pagodas. He went there with only one schooner. When he came back there were four, five or ten schooners fully laden with construction materials. A large sum of money have been spent on it. Where does this money come from? This must have come from some organisation. This organisation provides money to purchase construction materials. This organisation can be none other than the State organisation. Building pagodas, monasteries and ordination halls is a ruse for gathering of information.

No matter what they say, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw knows himself. He is free and stay away from politics. Sayadaw's main thing in life is to propagate and perpetuate Buddha *Sasana*. In truth Sayadaw is imbued with nationalism. His nationalism is not what they say. His nationalism is that Kayin national were once a highly cultured people. They built zedis, stupas, shrines and pagodas in the wildernesses

of the State. These religious edifices were now ruined in the wildernesses. Sayadaw has to shine the Light which had been flickered or extinguished in the past. In present, there should be a Light which flames and in future, there will be Light which will shine all over the Kayin State.

This is Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw's nationalism.

When Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Samghas went round for alms-food at the refugee camps at Bau Naw, Sho-ka Low, Bei-ka Lau the devotees, tears in their eyes, and supplicated to Sayadaw that, they wanted to return to their native land. Sayadaw's heart filled with compassion. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw stopped going for round of alms-food to Mai Tha Waw. They misunderstood that going alms round was to foment instigation.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw began building Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery at Thu Mwai Hta.

Hill. The Monastery is 500 ft in length and 180 ft in width. A monolithic and impressive building. It costs over 29 lakhs baht. The consecration ceremony was held on the Full Moon Day of Tazaungmon, 1355 ME. Over 30,000 devotees attended the consecration ceremony.

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Presiding Sayadaw of Ma Na Palaw Monastery U Wi Za-na (Rambo monk) called an all-samghas meeting at Ma Na Palaw. Bo Mya assisted for successful holding of the Samghas meeting. Over 300 Samghas, except Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw, were present at the meeting.

U Wi Za-na reported to Bo Mya that, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw defied his (Bo Mya) order by not attending the all-Samgha's meeting. It can be presumed that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is a confidant of the State Law and Order Restoration Council, and an agent sent to destroy the KNU organization.

Actually Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw at that time was busy building the Maha Thu-pi Na Pagoda in Chiangmai, Thailand. The pagoda was to be built atop the 8,400 ft high Maha Thu-pi Na Mountain. Sayadaw's main concern is for the flourishing of Buddha *Sasana*. His conviction is to stay away from politics. This doesn't mean that he defied the KNU nor fawning the government.

In recognition of Sayadaw's endeavours for the propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana*., the State has supplicated Sayadaw to accept the religious title. Sayadaw refused to accept it. The State supplicated Sayadaw for three times to accept the religious title and three times Sayadaw refused to accept.

Sayadaw's convictions for not accepting the religious title are:

1. The conviction that he (Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw) will stay away from any organisations;

2. The conviction that by refusing to accept the religious title conferred by the State Bo Mya and U Wi Za-na (Rambo monk) have no reason whatsoever to slander him (Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw) as a confidant of the State Law and Order Restoration Council;
3. The conviction that upholding that principle he (Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw) is free from the accusation that he (Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw) is an agent of the State Law and Order Restoration Council.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw eschewed ostentation and fame. Ostentation and fame, may be, needed for town-dwelling monks but not necessarily for *jāhans*, who scrupulously observed the austere regimen of resort to a forest abode and austere practice of forest-dwelling.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is a man of high principle and a true *bhikkhu*.

The *Hti-daw* hoisting ceremony of Maha Thu-pi Na Pagoda was held on the 12th Waxing Day of Tabodwe, 1355 ME.

Sayadaw returned to Myaing-Nge: Ngu from Chiangmai, Thailand.

After some time Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw prepared for the building of Ah-tu La Mara-zein Pagoda in Papon. Meanwhile, W/T messages and courier messages were sent to Sayadaw to return to Thu Mwai Hta. But Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw could not go for he was busy with building the Ah-tu La Mara-zein Pagoda. When no reply was received from Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw they made the same accusations that he (Sayadaw) openly defied their order. This was because he got support from the State Law and Order Restoration Council.

But KNU dared not opposed openly because Sayadaw is being revered and respected by the people. The KNU chalked up a grievances against Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw.

Ah-tu La Mara-zein Pagoda was nearly completed. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw received a message. Sayadaw was requested to return to Thu Mwai Hta urgently to attend a matter of utmost important. Sayadaw this time replied that, he would come to Thu Mwai Hta on 8, 9 or 10 Waxing Day of Waso, 1356 ME. When the KNU received Sayadaw's reply, they became suspicious. They considered it was a ruse. The KNU arrested four intimate disciples of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw as hostages. The four hostages were: U Shwe Lone, his son Maung Nyan Thein, U Ah-du and Kyawt Khaw. They will be released only after Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw returned to Thu Mwai Hta.

The *Hti-daw* hoisting ceremony of Ah-tu La Mara-zein Pagoda was held on the 8th Waxing Day of Waso, 1356 ME.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and 37 Samghas left for Thu Mwai Hta.

It was rainy season. Creeks and mountain streams were swollen with flash floods. Sayadaw and Samghas arrived at Phaw Hta Creek. The current was too swift and was too dangerous to cross. The Creek is too wide if compared with others. There were other routes to choose. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw received an information that, Sayadaw and Samghas would detour the Phaw Hta Creek and follow a less dangerous route. The KNU death-squad was to intercept the Samghas and brought Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw to Ma Na Palaw, if Sayadaw resisted—killed him.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw thought if he were alone he would face the danger. But he

had to look after the life of Samghas. Facing dangers and hardships, Sayadaw and Samghas venture crossing the Phaw Hta Creek. Finally they reached the other bank. They climbed the Phaw Hta Mountain, and arrived at Phaw Hta Monastery after midnight. They rested for the night there. The next day, they left for Thu Mwai Hta. After the night stop at Thu-lai Hta, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Samghas arrived at Thu Mwai Hta.

The news spread like forest fire. The four hostages were freed. Sayadaw was summoned to meet Bo Mya at Ma Na Palaw. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw went straight to Ma Na Palaw. When Sayadaw reached the other bank, he saw KNU soldiers dragging a corpse and pushed it into the water. It was the remains of Phado Whee, a Central Committee Member and minister for trade. He was accused of adultery and killed.

A group of armed soldiers surrounded Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw with their guns at ready. They brought Sayadaw to Bo Mya. When Sayadaw seated Bo Mya said,

"I sent messages to you several times. Why don't you come."

"I was busy building pagodas. You know very well about that, Ah-hpo."

"I sent messages not only over W/T but also with courier. Why? You think I am not worth caring for?"

"I sent a reply to you that I'll be leaving for Thu Mwai Hta on 8, 9, or 10th Waxing Day of Waso. Now I am here. I come to you whenever you sent a message to me. When I meet you, you just keep on saying not to build pagodas, the situation isn't improved and then where is peace."

"Is it not right there is no peace?"

"I have already said before. You do what you believe in and I am doing what I believe in. Ah-hpo is doing for the betterment of the Kayin people and for peace and I am building pagodas for spiritual enlightenment of the people, and to have peace. Apart from this, I have no aim."

"You said you have no aim. The situation is very serious now."

"What does that mean, Ah-hpo."

"I received information that vegetarians are planning to destroy the KNU organisation."

"Look here, Ah-hpo. Your organisation is well-armed and well-trained and they are veterans of the revolutionary war. The vegetarians who are building pagodas have only mason's trowel, much less a needle for weapon and then how...?"

"And then what?"

"The vegetarians have experiences and know only how to build pagodas. How can they destroy your organisation?"

"No matter what. There are people behind you and they support you."

"They are only religious devotees. I do not understand matters relating to armed struggle nor politics. It's not concern with me."

"Now, now. The information is well founded. You must give me an assurance."

"What assurance?"

"You must give me a pledge. A signed-pledge that the vegetarians are not going to destroy the KNU organisation."

"Of course I will sign the pledge."

Bo Mya handed a letter to Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. Sayadaw willingly signed the letter.

"Ah-hpo, I want you to tell one thing."

"What's that?"

"The pledge-letter which I had signed just now shall make known to my disciples. They will be at Thu Mwai Hta Monastery on the Full Moon Day of Waso. I request Ah-hpo to come to Thu Mwai Hta Monastery on that day and give explanation on it. Then only will they know about it."

"Good. I'll come to Thu Mwai Hta on the appointed date."

* * * * *

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw went to No.209 students' organisation and requested to type the following letter :

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has personally signed the pledge letter stating that, the vegetarians have pledged not to destroy the KNU organisation.

Ah-hpo also declares that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is not a confidant of the State Law and Order Restoration Council..

Sd. x x x x

Bogyoke Mya

KNU Headquarters

Ma Na Palaw

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw returned to Thu Mwai Hta.

* * * * *

Place : Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery. Thu Mwai Hta.

Date : Full Moon Day of Waso, 1356 ME.

The KNU leadership arrived at Thu Mwai Hta on the appointed date.

Members of the KNU leadership were:

1. Bogyoke-gye: Saw Bo Mya
2. Bogyoke Maung Maung

3. Bogyoke Tamala Baw

4. 'Col.' Tu Tu Lay

5. Phado Mehn Shar

6. Noh Phyu Sayadaw U Wi Za-na (Rambo monk)

Bogyoke Mya explained to the congregation about the pledged-letter that, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw had signed. The devotees anxiously awaited Sayadaw's reply. Sayadaw handed the letter which he had typed to Bogyoke Mya and Noh Phyu Sayadaw.

Noh Phyu Sayadaw read the letter, torn it and wiped his mouth with the paper. Bogyoke Mya read the letter loudly and after he finished reading he placed the letter on the table and said,

"Defying the phados appointed by the KNU is the same as defying the KNU.

All members of the vegetarian organisation are ordered to serve as porters."

There was an uproar. One U Waw Khi stood up and said,

"Of course, if we were ordered to serve as porters, well, we'll serve, on conditions that we are not forced to buy liquor nor ordered to carry meat and fish. We will only carry rice and ammunition. And we are not to be insulted. If these conditions are fulfilled we will serve as porters."

Bo Mya pointed the thumb to his chest and shouted back,

"I am KNU Bogyoke Saw Bo Mya. Your Phone-gyee is stealthily building pagodas, monasteries and ordination halls. Usurped our land. Planning to destroy the KNU organisation. For this reason, we'll have to drive out your Phone-gyee from our land."

U Waw Khi stood firm and said,

"We are just ordinary hill-people. We haven't seen Samghas before. This Jahan

teaches us the fundamental of religion. We rever and respect this Jahan. If you drive out this Jahan we will not tolerate it. We will not serve in your armed forces nor serve as porters. We will stop dealing with you. That's all."

Bo Mya shouted back,

"No one shall disobey my orders, understand. Whoever defy me shall be punished severely."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw was lost in his thought. He had signed the pledged-letter as ordered. In return he requested to sign the letter of his. He (Sayadaw) had given him (Bo Mya) his own coin. Why there is anger?

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw stood up and said, slowly,

"Ah-hpo Bogyoke. You accused me that I was building pagodas stealthily in areas

under KNU control. It is impossible to build pagodas stealthily, for it has to be built with the help of devotees from neighbouring villages. Ah-hpo, during the 45 years of revolution how much you have done for the betterment of the Kayin national. Are there any development in economy, education, social and religion during that years? You can proudly say that with the consent of the KNU the Eik-sa Tha-ya Phaung-daw Oo Pagoda and the monastery, like other religious edifices, were being built. Moreover, our endeavours to flourish religion is in one way or another help Kayin revolution.

Ah-hpo, you are striving for peace and development of the Kayin national, so also I am doing for the flourishing of religion, and peace. You have been striving to have peace and development through political means, I also am doing for the

spiritual enlightenment of the people and for peace through religion. We are not going to meddle in politics and our main concern is for the propagation and perpetuation of religion. The vegetarians at Thu Mwai Hta have no plan whatsoever to destroy the KNU organisation."

Bogyoke Mya said,

"Your endeavour is of no help. Ah-lan Ta-yar Sayadaw build pagodas to have peace. But there is no peace. Only large sum of money have been spent. He is just deceiving the people."

The devotees were indignant when Bo Mya insulted their revered and respected Sayadaw. An uproar and commotion broke out. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw escorted the leadership out of the room. The meeting broke out.

Resentment and indignation deeply rooted in the heart of the people.

Chapter IX

Physicians from Popular Clinic, Mawlamyaing, informed Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw for annual medical check-up. Sayadaw left for Mawlamyaing.

After medical check-up, Sayadaw returned to Myaing-gye: Ngu. From Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw continued his journey to Thu Mwai Hta by outboard motor.

Thamala Baw was at the helms of the outboard motor. The little boat was tossing helplessly by the winds and waves. He tried to approach the bank. Unfortunately the propeller struck a coral reef and torn out of the shaft. Tamala Baw was hard at controlling the boat. Waves swept over the boat and water began to enter and it was slowly sinking. Sayadaw and two others jumped out of the boat. They landed on the nearest boulders. A rescue boat arrived

at the scene. But Sayadaw decided to go by land to Thu Mwai Hta.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw followed the route to May-daw Kyo Pagoda. At May-daw Kyo Monastery Sayadaw met his old friend and mentor U Jathei and his sister nun Daw Wunna Sa-yi. They set up a nunnery near May-daw Kyo Pagoda. They taught Buddhist Scriptures to nuns. The nuns were from neighbouring hills.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw enraptured when he saw these nuns. Sayadaw ensured Daw Wunna Sa-yi that he will send alms-food from Thu Mwai Hta and told her not to allow the nuns to go round for alms-food. Sayadaw also warned them that they were living in the place where Christians are predominant.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw also met U Jathei. He warned U Jathei not to bring strangers from outside and stayed in the monastery

for most of the time. Sayadaw then added that, since U Jathei is not a Kayin national, naturally they would watch him closely. Before leaving Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw reminded them to look well after themselves.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw left May-daw Kyo Monastery early in the morning and arrived Htee-paw Mu-naw Village. The villagers heartily welcomed Sayadaw. The religious teachings have opened their eyes and monastic education has entirely changed their life. The KNU opposed the opening of monastic schools in the villages. For it was easy to control and manipulate them when they are ignorant and backward.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw left the village at noon and arrived at Bau-kay Gate. Sayadaw left the Gate by an outboard motor. The motor boat berthed at Thu Mwai Hta quay in the evening.

9th Waxing Day of Wagaung, 1356 ME.

Bo Mya sent a message from KNU Headquarters, Ma Na Palaw to Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. He summoned Sayadaw to come to Ma Na Palaw to attend an important matter.

As soon as Sayadaw arrived, Bo Mya said,

"Phone-gyee, the hermit at May-daw Kyo Mountain is a captain from Burma Army. Tell him to leave the place at once. We will be in trouble if he is there."

"U Jathei has been with me for years. I will take responsible for him. Nothing will happen."

"And then there is his sister, a nun. I received an information that she secretly keeps weapons and W/T set. I don't like nuns to be there. They impede our organisational work and impair our unity. Tell

her to leave the place at once. If she is not leaving the place voluntarily, we will go and drive her out."

"No. She is there not to make division among the people. She teaches hill-people to become cultured and disseminate knowledge."

"What is she teaching there? No one must teach any other language, except our Kayin Language. I heard you open a monastic school at Mai-ka Zawt Mountain. What is the meaning of it? It obstructs our education system. Close your school at once."

"No monastic school at Mai-ka Zawt Mountain. There are only Samaneras. They learn only Buddhist Scriptures."

"We don't need schools here. We have our own schools. Don't teach your novice and

others. We don't like teaching Burmese Language here. I strongly object this. This is the last warning. Understand? You can go now."

It was nearly dark when Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw arrived at Thu Mwai Hta.

NB. Their education system is teaching of Kayin Christian Religion.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw was in dilemma. Sayadaw's heart was heavy. Hundreds of Samghas, Samaneras and nuns were learning and preaching of *Dhamma* and imparting knowledge to the hill-people in the wildernesses of Kayin State. The hill-people have taken a new lease of life.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw determined to hold out his ground no matter what. His promise for the propagation and perpetuation of Buddha *Sasana* will hold good as long as he is alive. He would not let it nip in the bud.

11th Waxing Day of Wagaung, 1356 ME.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw received news about nunnery at May-daw Kyo Mountain.

Phado Wei-la Min of KNU organisation ordered Samghas, Samaneras and nuns to assemble at May-daw Kyo Pagoda. When all were present, Phado Wei-La Min said,

"You are not allowed to stay here, leave the place at once. I have given you this order from Bo Mya."

Daw Wunna Sar-yi replied,

"We have been brought here by Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. We dare not leave this place without Sayadaw's consent. We are not going to leave this place as you order."

"I warn you. You will be in trouble if you are obstinate."

"We are here to preach *Dhamma* to enlighten the spiritual well-being of the

hill-people and to disseminate knowledge for the betterment of the people. We request you to allow us to stay here."

"We are not going to allow teaching of Burmese Language. Only Kayin Language is to be taught. I am telling you good. I'll give you three days to leave this place, that's all."

After giving ultimatum, Phado Wei-la Min and KNUs left May-daw Kyo Pagoda.

13th Waxing Day of Wagaung, 1356 ME.

An outboard motor boat berthed at Thu Mwai Hta quay. Bo Mya had sent a motor boat to bring Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw to Phwe Bou Lu.

Once Sayadaw arrived, Bo Mya said,

"I received a well-founded information that the nun at May-daw Kyo has secretly

kept weapons and a W/T set. Tell her to leave the place at once and disrobe the Kayin nuns and send them back to their villages. Don't do anything without my knowledge."

"Ah-hpo. It's rainy season now. Will you please postpone your order till October. By that time the rainy season will be over. I give you my word."

"No. send them back now. It's not suitable for women to stay there. And we don't want to see them."

"Yes, Ah-hpo. If you do wish, I'll send them back. Permit me to take leave."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw sent Kay-doe to May-daw Kyo Pagoda to bring back Samaneras and nuns to Thu Mwai Hta.

They all sat before Sayadaw with bow heads and crying. Sayadaw was helpless. His

heart ached. He couldn't help them any more. At the same day, Sayadaw sent them to Mawlamyaing.

From 3rd Waning Day of Wagaung, 1356 ME to 10th Waning Day of Wagaung, 1356 ME Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw had set-forth through the wildernesses of Kayin State. His last itinerary was Papon.

A message was waiting for when Sayadaw arrived at Thu Mwai Hta. He went straight to meet Bo Mya at Ma Na Palaw.

"Phone-gye:. You are a troublesome man. Without my knowledge you ordained my men to monkhood. You are doing at your whim. Don't poke your nose everywhere. If you are staying in our place, don't do anything without letting us known."

'Lt' Tha-di and yebaws entered monkhood voluntarily. But Bo Mya put blame on Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw.

13th Waning Day of Wagaung, 1356 ME.

Disciples from Tar-ku Lau Kyo (Maha Nyein Aye Mountain) came and reported to Sayadaw that KNU soldiers forced to disrobe 'Lt' Tha-di and yebaws. They also disrobed the Samaneras. A commotion broke out. The disciples said, when the KNU resorted to arms, the devotees resisted with swords, sticks and brick-bats.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has an admonition—was this the beginning of the end?

Bo Mya summoned Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw to Ma Na Palaw. Bo Mya blamed Sayadaw that it was at the instigation of Sayadaw that the hill-people ventured to attack his men. Bo Mya then ordered Sayadaw to leave Thu Mwai Hta and return to Myaing-gye: Ngu.

On the 9th Waning Day of Thadinkyut 1356 ME, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and

U Jathei left Thu Mwai Hta for Myaing-gye: Ngu.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has been casting a bronze Buddha Statue weighing 12,777 viss with a height of 29ft. The name of the bronze Buddha Statue is "Bai Thit-sa Mu-ni Buddha Statue."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has an admonition that grave dangers were looming ahead. According to the prevailing conditions, if he (Sayadaw) were continued building of pagodas, monasteries, ordination halls and other religious edifices, it would bring more harm than good. Therefore, it would be wiser to take a repose for the time being

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw also decided that, he will not make an itinerary beyond Mai-seik. Thus having decided, he wrote letters to chairman Sayadaw of Kayin Samghas

Ahphweigyoke, Bogyoke Mya and U Sandaw
Ba-tha and Samghas at Thu Mwai Hta.

To,

U Wi Za-na

Chairman Sayadaw

Kayin Samghas Ahphweigyoke

Ma Na Palaw

Most Venerable Chairman Sayadaw,

I respectfully supplicates with regret that I am not able to attend the forthcoming all-Samghas meeting. I have decided that at the beginning of the Full Moon Day of Tazaungmon, 1356 ME, I am going to take a repose to attend my personal affairs for the duration of 49 months (four years and one month).

During that period I will not make any itinerary nor build pagodas, monasteries, ordination halls, religious edifices etc. I also supplicates to the Most Venerable

Sayadaw to take over the administration of Thu Mwai Hta Monastery and other religious edifices.

I supplicates also that I will recall Samghas and Samaneras from Thu Mwai Hta Monastery.

U Thu Za-na

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw

To,

Bogyoke Mya

Chairman

KNU Central Committee

Ma Na Palaw

Chairman da ka daw,

Sayadaw has decided to take a repose at the age of 45. Now the time has arrived. The repose will be a duration of 49 months (four years and one month). During the period, Sayadaw will reside only at

Myaing-gye: Ngu, and will attend only personal affairs. Sayadaw will stop building of pagodas, monasteries, and other religious edifices beyond Mai-seik.

Sayadaw wish to express thanks to da ka daw for giving assistance in the propagation and perpetuation of *Sasana* in places, not only along the Yun-salin Chaung and Than Lwin River, but also at some places in Thailand.

As a Kayin national, Sayadaw is going to listen to da ka daw's behest. Sayadaw has also forgiven what had happened in the past.

May da ka daw has patient and sympathy towards those who served under you.

U Thu Za-na

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw

To,

U Sandaw Ba-tha, Samghas and Samaneras,

Sayadaw has handed over the administration of monasteries, ordination halls and other religious edifices to Noh Phyu Sayadaw and Bo Mya. Sayadaw supplicates Samghas and Samaneras to leave Thu Mwai Hta Monastery as soon as receiving this letter.

Samghas and Samaneras are strictly forbidden not to bring anything whatsoever from the Monastery.

Sayadaw U Thu Za-na

Myaing-gye: Ngu

Sayadaw U Thu Za-na took repose at Myaing-gye: Ngu for a duration of 49 months (four years and one month). During his stay Sayadaw tightly supervised the casting of bronze Buddha Statue—"Bai Thit-sa Mu-ni Buddha Statue".

Chapter X

The following are the extracts from the diary of Bogyoke Kyaw Than (DKBA).

14th Waxing Day of Waso, 1356 ME.

After I paid obeisance to Eik-sa Tha-ya Phaung-daw Oo Pagoda at Thu Mwai Hta, I went to the Monastery. I met Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. After I paid obeisance, Sayadaw said,

"Da ka. They are not going to allow nuns to stay at May-daw Kyo."

"Why are they not allowed to stay nuns there. It's already lenten month. How can the nuns leave the place?"

"They also said that U Jathei's sister is a Bamar and is therefore not reliable. The Kayin nuns are only 13 and 14 years old."

"Why? She teaches only Scriptures and helps widen knowledge for betterment of

their life. They should also know that it's sharing of merits"

A thought came into my mind. Few have enough courage to come to the wildernesses, much less staying there and disseminate knowledge. Only a few has courage and selfless devotion to have their life working for the less fortunate one.

To deny the fundamental of reading, writing and chances to uplift their life, is a heinous crime ever committed by the self-seekers. The KNU's have in mind that, the more ignorant and backward they are, the more easy to control and manipulate them. And if the Bamar are not reliable people why they accept students' tatmadaw, Ma-Da-Ta and NLD. Are they not Bamar? They are politicians and are therefore more dangerous. If they can accept them, why they cannot accept the Bamar nun

who poses no threat to them. I was more indignant than ever, and speak out the truth which might not be divulged.

I have to suppress my indignation. It was not opportune to make any move for it would be like dashing my head against the wall.

Full Moon Day of Tazaungmon, 1356 ME.

It was my 26th birthday. I went to Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery. After paying obeisance to Sayadaws U Kun Thain-nya and U Pyin-nyar Tha-mi, I asked where Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw was. U Kun Thain-nya told me Sayadaw went to Papon to send back U Jathei. U Jathei was forced to leave May-daw Kyo Monastery. U Kun Thain-nya said,

"Da ka. Have you heard about news from Mai Tha Waw?"

"Venerable sir, What's news?"

"We went to Mai Tha Waw for a round of alms-food. There, we met with Noh Phyu Sayadaw. Noh Phyu Sayadaw said the KNU leadership has decided to banish Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw from KNU controlled area. After Sayadaw had been banished, they are going to execute 17 Buddhist leaders. At present, they dare not banish Sayadaw because Sayadaw is revered and respected by the people. As it could not be helped they just look on with folded arms for the time being."

"Who are the 17 Buddhist leaders, Venerable sir."

"I don't know da ka. Noh Phyu Sayadaw didn't say anything about it."

I was trembled with fear. Who were the 17. Am I one of them? It wouldn't be. My mind flashed the scene of 1993 affair. How I lead

the people, and how I reported the accident at Mai Pa and Mai-la Hta to Bogyoke Mya at Ma Na Palaw, taking of names who attended the meeting. The night 'Captain' Kyaw Aye came into my barrack and inquired the name of the leader and 'Major' Wah-htai came to meet me. Yes. I am one of the 17s. No. No. It couldn't be. I committed nothing wrong at all. All I had done was with their permission. And as a Buddhist, I was doing what I believe in.

But the thought nagging me all the time.

26-11-94

I well remembered the day because it was the turning point in my life. After returning from Thu Mwai Hta, my mind was not at peace. I was restless.

I went to Thu Mwai Hta Monastery today. I saw Samghas who were returning from

all-Samghas meeting at Thu Mwai Hta. All Samghas who were residing in the area of No.1 brigade to No.7 brigade had to attend the meeting. The meeting was held under the aegis of Bo Mya. Bo Mya attended the meeting. At the meeting Samghas were ordered to sign the resolution to banish Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw from KNU controlled area.

U Than Wa-ra, who went underground in 1988 objected the resolution. U Than Wa-ra said he was not going to sign the resolution. He pointed out that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has put life and soul for the propagation and perpetuation of Buddha *Sasana*. He noted that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw preferred to hold aloof from politics. He told the congregation that Bogyoke Mya's design to banish Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw was entirely wrong. He added that he went underground because he

opposed the Burma Socialist Programme Party. Now he strongly objected Bo Mya's plan to banish Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. And for this he was ready to sell his life dear.

After U Kun Thain-nya finished recounting experiences, I came to realise that Buddhists were being ill-treated and discriminated because of their religion.

I cried my eyes out.

When I arrived at Thu Mwai Hta it was nearly 5 pm.

I decided to back out of the revolution and armed struggle line. I wrote down the following letter.

I am no more interested in the revolution and armed struggle line. I have decided to live the life of a civilian. If I were

accused of unpatriotic, I am ready to receive it but not to have any dealing with the revolution.

Sd. x x x x

Kyaw Than

'Warrant Officer'

27-11-94

In the morning Mau-ka Lat and Noh Law-pa Lau came to my barrack to have some fish paste and chillies. 'Sergeant' San Myint joined us. I told them I have decided to live the life of a civilian, and what had happened during the last few days. When 'Sergeant' San Myint learned about how Buddhists were ill-treated and discriminated, he was outraged and told me that he too would join hands with me.

4 pm. 27-11-94

The two deserters—I and 'Sergeant' San Myint, went to Mau-ka Lat detachment at Ma Khaing Gonn Mountain. Another 40 yebaws came to our side. We were going back to Thu Mwai Hta. We came down from the mountain. When we were near the Kawt Karat Island, we saw 400 people including Samghas heading toward us. They were from Thu Mwai Hta and neighbouring villages. They had abandoned their villages for fear of persecution. The outrage was intolerable. We all decided to fight it out. We marched to Khway-aik Taung. Buddhist Kayin soldiers under 'Lt' Myint Thein of No.1 brigade joined us. There were forty soldiers. Another 30 soldiers under 'Lt' Johnny joined us. Now, we were a combined forces of 110. There may be different of opinion in other matters but for the cause of *Sasana* there is cohesion and unity among the ranks.

We arrived Mai-la Hta at 11 pm. Officer in-charge Saw Tha Phwei and I discussed over the affair. I told him that we want only Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and U Jathei be allowed to stay at Thu Mwai Hta and May-daw Kyo Monastery. We don't want to kill each other. Saw Tha Phwei told me 'Lt' Phar Mee and 'Lt' Maung Chit together with 18 yebaws left for Thu Mwai Hta. They took 8 RPG with them. We left for Thu Mwai Hta.

When we arrived at Thu Mwai Hta we found the new two-storey Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery was deserted and silent. We joined with forces of Bo Phar Mee. There were now 130 soldiers. Bo Phar Mee and yebaws took position at the quay and we took position near Eik-sa Tha -ya Phaung-daw Oo Pagoda.

2-12-94

Arrived Bo Phar Nwee with two companies. Within three days, our strength grown to 415. Actually, we were an assembly of consider from various detachments.

On (5-12-94) Central Committee Members came to meet us.

Members of the Central Committee were:

1. Bogyoke Maung Maung
2. Bogyoke Hla Htoo
3. 'Col' Tu Tu Lay
4. 'Major' Htain Maung
5. 'Major' Kyaw Lay
6. 'Lt' Johnny
7. 'Lt' Tamala
8. Phado Mehn Yin Sein
9. Phado Mehn Shar

10. Phado San Hlaing

11. 'Lt' Kyi Aung.

They met leaders of the affair. Bo Phar Mee, Bo Phar Nwee and Bo Kyaw Than. I didn't consider myself as a leader. Well, if they called me a leader than I am the leader.

When I met the Central Committee Members, they directed questions on me. Then only will I know that I was their target. I was naive at that time.

My statement was recorded by Bogyoke Maung Maung, 'Col' Tu Tu Lay and Phado Mehn Shar. I demanded that the reply be given within three days. They promised it.

When the Central Committee Members were about to leave, Bogyoke Hla Htoo and 'Major' Htain Maung told us to go and fetch ration from the detachment or else the enemy will confiscate it. Accordingly my men went and brought the ration and ownerless weapons.

The next day Central Committee Members came and ascertained our wishes. I told them that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and U Jathei must be allowed to stay at Thu Mwai Hta and May-daw Kyo Monastery. They began to make preparation for inviting Sayadaw. I said that we believe their words and told them that we were going to wait Sayadaw at Thu Mwai Hta Monastery.

I took off leave and walked towards the hill. On the way one of the Central Committee Members came to me and warned me not to be easily swayed under their persuasive words. He added that, he knew very well their tactics and motive. If I were the man who moved first, there were others who would follow my steps. I suspected him that he was trying to get information from me and asked him point blank. He said he was telling this in good faith and added that if I were not acted fast enough I

would become like the victims of Baw Tha-yaw. I then noticed that this Central Committee Member just sat at the meeting without saying a word. I realised that he was telling the truth and in good faith. I ordered my men to detain the Central Committee Members for the time being. They will be allowed to leave tomorrow. Bo Johnny came and we had a talk.

Bogyoke Maung Maung stealthily left the place. When prevented by Bo Phar Mee and yebaws at the quay Bogyoke Maung Maung said that Bo Kyaw Than gave permission to leave. Bogyoke Maung Maung escaped from Thu Mwai Hta. When the soldiers learned about it they inquired who was Bo Kyaw Than. As I had already said we were an assembly of soldiers from various detachments, we didn't know each other. They demanded why I allowed Bogyoke Maung Maung to leave the place. I explained to them that, I had not given permis-

sion to Bogyoke Maung Maung to leave. Actually, he tried escaping from Thu Mwai Hta. I told them that I was with Bo Johnny all the time. This saved me my neck.

Dairy of an Unknown Soldier

9 pm. 1-12-94

Bo Phar Mee and we arrived at Thu Mwai Hta.

10 am. 2-12-94

Bo Kyaw Than, Bo Mau-ka Lat, Bo Phar Nwee, Bo Aung Ngwe, Bo Mee Thouk and yebaws arrived.

5-12-94

The KNU leadership arrived from Ma Na Palaw. When they treated the affair lightly, we demanded the reply to be given by higher authority. They accepted our demand and returned to headquarters.

11-12-94

The KNU leadership arrived. We demanded Bo Mya should personally meet us. They reply that Bo Mya will come tomorrow morning at 9 am. We asked if Bogyoke Mya were not coming tomorrow, shall we go and meet him. The answer was affirmative. We again asked if we were going to meet him will there be an attack on the way. They answered that we will not be attacked. They also gave assurance that if we were attacked we can kill them.

12-12-94

When Bo Mya not arrived, Bo Phar Mee, Bo Maung Chit, Bo Kyawt Kawt and some civilians went to Ma Na Palaw to meet Bo Mya.

9:00 am.

They crossed the creek and marched along the road leading to Ma Na Palaw. They

met a group of KNU soldiers at the out post. There was no resistance. Bo Phar Mee and yebaws disarmed them.

9:20 am.

Before they reached the next out post, Bo Phar Mee and yebaws were being fired upon by 62 mm recoilless rifle. Bo Phar Mee and 'Private' Phar Thit Ka-lo were killed. A fire-fight ensued. We retreated to Thu Mwai Hta. From Hsin Phyu Taung Mountain, the KNUs fired with heavy weapons at Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery. Miraculously, shells overpassed the Monastery and exploded at some distance.

4 pm.

We bore the bodies of Bo Phar Mee and 'Private' Phar Thit Ka-lo.

Seeing the remains one of the Phados said that for years Buddhists have been bullied

by the Christians. He himself has been humiliated by the Christians. He couldn't do anything because he was the only one in the Central Committee.

He cried his eyes out.

9:00 pm.

We buried Bo Phar Mee and Phar Thit Ka-lo. The first bloodshed in the internecine war.

[Omitted from (13-12-94) to (2-1-95)]

3-1-95

Several rounds of heavy weapons fall near Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery, but miraculously not a single shell hit the Monastery. We were now shortage of ration.

News had reached that the Democratic Kayin Buddhist Association has been formed at Myaing-gye: Ngu.

We retreated from Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery. The Monastery was razed to the ground at 4 pm. Bo Hla Soe, Bo Nyunt Pe and Bo Tee Chai who left behind to defend the rear, were killed in KNU bombardment.

The internecine war has begun.

Chapter XI

Attempts have been made to assassinate Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. Sayadaw has to spend most of the time in the forest of Myaing-gye: Ngu.

Phado Tha Htoo Kyaw was the chairman of No.1 brigade region and Phado La Ba was the secretary. Phado Tha Htoo Kyaw assigned his personal assistant 'Lt' Daing (a) Moan-daing to purchase ammunitions at the upper reach of Thu Mwai Hta.

'Lt' Daing met one Kyaw Char (a) Htee Char. Kyaw Char gave arms and ammunitions and promising monetary reward to 'Lt' Daing to assassinate Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw, his mother and 18 Buddhist leaders.

'Lt' Daing and assassins left Thayet-pin quay for Myaing-gye: Ngu at 9 pm. They crossed Than Lwin River. People's militias on

the bank of Myaing-gye: Ngu saw the two boats and challenged. The boats rowed toward Kawt Karat Island. The militias chased the two boats. 'Lt' Daing whipped out the gun and fired at the boats. The gun misfired. He ordered his men to open fire at the boats. Strange enough that their guns also misfired. They disembarked from the boat and under cover of darkness they again opened fire. The guns misfired.

They were caught at the house of the village headman and brought to Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. The people's militias searched 'Lt' Daing and they found photos and lists of 18 leaders who were to be assassinated. U Nandi who was with Sayadaw at the time said that he will take the responsibility of the assassins. 'Lt' Daing and the soldiers were handed over to Tatmadaw out post at Kam-ma MOUNG.

A second attempt on the life of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw was also foiled.

When Phado (U) Tha Htoo Kyaw learned about an attempted assassination on Sayadaw's life he was outraged. He supplicated Sayadaw to lead the people for the perpetuation of race, language and religion. Sayadaw replied that if it were not infringed the *Vinaya*: Sayadaw will accept it.

Not long after that U Tha Htoo Kyaw together with 70 followers and U La Ba with 63 followers came to Myaing-gye: Ngu. They brought with them office equipment and opened an office.

The following leaders and their followers joined forces at Myaing-gye: Ngu :

- Bo Moe Nyo and 30 followers;
- Bogyoke Ywa-haig and 10 followers;
- Bo-gye: Tun Hlaing and 60 followers;
- Bo Maung Kyi and 10 followers;

- Bo Myint Than and 20 followers;
- Phado Kyaw Yar-yu, Mehn Nay Lin Aung and Phado Ba Nyunt San.

Buddhist Kayin soldiers from various detachments and out posts enlisted at the front or at Myaing-gye: Ngu.

On December 20, 1994, a preliminary meeting was held at Myaing-gye: Ngu. And on December 21, 1994, the meeting formed the Democratic Kayin Buddhist Association (DKBA). [Announcement No.1/94]

The meeting elected six Sayadaws as Patrons of the Association. When Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw heard the Association has elected him as one of the Patrons of the Association, Sayadaw said;

"Sayadaw has accepted it only when da ka said the Association needs to have Sayadaw as one of the Patrons. Sayadaw has already said to U Tha Htoo Kyaw that

the affair will not rest here, there are works to do at present and in future. The responsibility will be yours. Sayadaw has nothing to do with this."

Those who were present at the meeting said that they well understood Sayadaw's intention. They also said that there was no other person better than Sayadaw to lead the Association. They will take collective responsibility in implementing the works.

Bo Kyaw Than, Bo Maung Ngwe and Central Committee Members laid down the future tasks and issued Announcement No.2/95.

* * * * *

Wife of 'Lt' Daing, who attempted to assassinate Sayadaw and 18 leaders, requested several times to give permission to meet Sayadaw. She was suspected and a search was made on her. The search party found two high explosive grenades hidden in her bodice. A *kamikaze* attack on Sayadaw's life.

One Saw Pi was sent to assassinate Sayadaw by KNU. For several days, he reconnoitred the place. He hid in the bamboo grove and waited for Sayadaw. When Sayadaw approached Saw Pi opened fire with his AK-47 automatic rifle. The gun misfired. Saw Pi inspected the gun and found that the breech of his AK-47 was damaged. The gun was nearly a brand new one. He was alarmed when he witnessed a strange phenomenon and repented. He surrendered himself to DKBA.

Democratic Kayin Buddhist Association

Announcement No. 2/95

1. Beginning on the 1st Waning Day of Tagu, 1351 ME, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has built pagodas, monasteries, ordination halls and other religious edifices at Thu Mwai Hta Hill. Though Bo Mya has given permission to build pagodas, monasteries, ordination halls and other religious edifices, he neither allow the painting of white coat of wash on pagodas nor the roof to be put on the monasteries. He also forbids Samghas not to accept alms from devotees on Thai side.
2. The KNU not only caused schism but also forbid the novitiation ceremony to be held. On the other hand men and women of other faiths who married to Christians

were made to profess Christianity. They also organised people from other faiths by giving assistance to those who wish to profess Christianity.

3. When Buddhist soldiers were killed or wounded in battle the KNU turn blind eye to those who left behind. On the other hand when Christian soldiers were killed or wounded in the battle, the KNU secretly give assistance to the family who left behind. When a Christian soldier committed anti-people stance, he was exempted from being taken action against him but were even promoted to higher position.
4. The DKBA has categorically denied the accusation made by the KNU that Buddhist soldiers had committed looting and other unruly behaviour when they were at

Thu Mwai Hta, Mai-la Hta, Mai Pa, Mai Paw Mu Hta and Thu Mwai Hta.

5. The KNUs attacked the group who went to meet Bo Mya at Ma Na Palaw. Bo Phar Mee and 'Private' Phar Thit Ka-lo were killed and some were wounded. The KNUs lobbed 58 rounds of 57 mm mortar bombs at Thu Mwai Hta Hill killing one and wounded a young woman. The Buddhist soldiers at Thu Mwai Hta sent back the KNU Central Committee Members safely to Ma Na Palaw.
6. A five-point agreement was reached between the Buddhist leaders and KNUs. In violation to the agreement, KNUs opened fire at Thu Mwai Hta Hill with heavy weapons. The Buddhist leadership abrogated the five-point agreement.
7. 3-1-95. The KNUs opened fire with AK medium machine gun, 50 mm and

81 mm heavy weapons at Eik-sa Tha-ya Monastery. Bo Hla Soe, Bo Nyunt Pe, Bo Tee Chai were killed and three civilians wounded.

4-1-95. The KNUs attacked Myaing-gye: Ngu with 75 mm, 88 mm, 107 mm and 50 calibre heavy weapons destroying two monasteries (valued at over 31 lakhs baht), and an ordination hall (valued at over 3 lakhs baht). Total loss in Myanmar Kyat being over 15 million.

8. The KNUs Christian leadership has proclaimed that they are doing for the development of the Kayin national, but in reality, they are doing a destructive work. And the majority of the people are mired in poverty.
9. Local people who were unable to enlist in KNU armed forces have to pay K 50,000 for each man. The people were afraid of the Tatmadaw and KNU, and were living in a state of alarm.

10. While the Buddhist soldiers were on the verge of starvation and having face the enmity and animosity of the people, the KNU leadership were accumulated with wealth and their children were studying at the institutes of higher education in foreign countries.
11. The KNU's threat to destroy 56 monasteries and persecute Samghas would only bring dissension among the people. Their nefarious design will bring dead and destruction to the people and it will prolong the sufferings of the people.
12. The DKBA opposes the nefarious design of the KNU, and it will fight to the end. The DKBA will strive hard for the development of the Kayin State, uplifting the living standard of the people, and for the perpetuation of race, language and

religion. The DKBA—a Vanguard of the People—will safeguard peace and tranquillity in the region. With the donations and assistance given by the people, the Association will put life and soul for the development of socio-economic conditions of the people.

Patrons and Central Committee Members

Myaing-gye: Ngu
February 9, 1995

On January 1, 1995, the DKBA has formed the Armed Forces of the Democratic Kayin Buddhist Association. The DKBA Armed Forces have pledged not to attack the KNU until and unless the DKBA were being attacked. Buddhist soldiers from various detachments enlisted at the DKBA Armed Forces at the fronts or at Myaing-gye: Ngu. Myaing-gye: Ngu

Sayadaw administered Oath of Allegiance—to sacrifice life and limb for the perpetuation of race, language and religion—to the enlisted men.

On January 3, 1995 KNUs destroyed religious edifices at Thu Mwai Hta (confluence area). On January 4, they attacked Myaing-gye: Ngu with 107 mm heavy weapon. On January 5, KNU company commander Mehn Dey with a force of 40 fired several rounds of heavy weapons from Pazun Myaung Village. Company commander Kawt Mu with a strong force of 100 reached Shan Ywa Thit-gye: Village to occupy Myaing-gye: Ngu area. Since the KNU forces began to attack the DKBA, the Armed Forces of the DKBA prepared to counter-attack the KNU. Commanders of DKBA Armed Forces held a war-council and issued orders to launch offensives against the KNU forces at all fronts. Pitch battles were fought throughout the western part of Kayin State.

Commanders of the DKBA's Armed Forces have considered that as long as the KNU strongholds remain, it will be a threat to the existence of the Association. The DKBA's Armed Forces drawn up Operation Plan to launch offensive war against the KNU Headquarters at Ma Na Palaw. (Announcement No. 7/95)

The DKBA's Armed Forces launched successive offensives against the KNU armed forces and occupied the following Camp;

- February 5, 1995—Mai-paw Mu-hta;
- February 6, 1995—Thu-lai Hta Camp;
- February 7, 1995—U Thu Ta Camp.

The only camp left under the KNU forces was Kawt Mura (a) Wah. Kha Thit camp.

Battle of Kawt Mura (a) Wah-kha Thit Camp

On February 8, 1995, the Armed Forces of DKBA attacked Kwat Mura (a) Wah-kha Camp. A pitch battle between DKBA troops and KNUs ensued. Casualties on both sides were

heavy. The Battle of Kawt Mura lasted from February 8 to February 20, 1995. The KNU forces could not hold the on slaught of the DKBA forces.

The KNU suffered heavy losses at the Battle of Kawt Mura. It set back the KNU organisation. A split into KNU Christian soldiers and KNU Buddhist soldiers—now a separate entity—the Democratic Kayin Buddhist Association—was the beginning of the end of the KNU organisation. And also the Battle of Kawt Mura was a debacle of the once powerful armed forces of the KNU.

* * * * *

Sayadaw U Na Rein-da and U Ka-wi Da-za brought an information that 'Captain' Ciple of KNU No.1 brigade, wanted to defect to DKBA forces.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw together with the two Sayadaws and DKBA compatriots went to the appointed place—Kyon Sein Village, to

welcome 'Captain' Ciple. On the way they stopped at Pha-lan Taung Monastery. 'Captain' Ciple became suspicious when Sayadaw was accompanied by DKBA compatriots and avoided to meet Sayadaw. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw decided to meet 'Captain' Ciple alone. He left suddenly for Kyon Sein Village. Only four or five DKBA men had had enough time to accompany Sayadaw.

Myaing-gye:Ngu Sayadaw went straight to 'Captain' Ciple's house. But 'Captain' Ciple went hiding. Sayadaw received an information that 'Captain' Ciple and 70 KNUs planned to attack them when night fall. The DKBA had only four or five men. They supplicated Sayadaw to retreat. Sayadaw had to return from the village

The account recorded Sayadaw's selfless devotion to have peace in the face of great dangers and hardships.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw miraculously escaped when assassins attempted on Sayadaw's life.

Chapter XII

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has been building and renovating the pagodas, ordination halls and monasteries throughout the country. Sayadaw is not only undertaking for the propagation and perpetuation of Buddha *Sasana*, but also helping other religion to flourish in Kayin State. Sayadaw's endeavours for the construction of the following religious edifices is worth mentioning here.

Bo Lin Htin, a Christian, was a commander of No.5 brigade. As it happened that he tried to kill *In-gyin* Sayadaw. Bo Lin Htin opened fire on Sayadaw. But the gun misfired. Bo Lin Htin, after witnessing this strange phenomenon, went to Ah-lan Ta-ya Sayadaw. He blandly said to Sayadaw to give him permission to experiment with the gun. Sayadaw willingly and without hesitation exposed his yellow robe and allowed Bo Lin Htin to experiment with the gun.

Bo Lin Htin contemplated that, if he (Bo Lin Htin) killed Sayadaw without any cause or animosity, he would have committed a grave sin which he could not forgive himself. Bo Lin Htin supplicated Sayadaw to forgive his sin. He repented and consoled himself to start building a da ma joun (a congregation hall). The foundation stones were laid on the 7th Waxing Day of Tabodwe, 1324 ME. As the da ma joun was still under construction, Ah-lan Ta-ya Sayadaw had an admonition on the fate of Bo Lin Htin, said,

"Da ka daw. Pour a consecration water for the meritorious deeds."

Bo Lin Htin poured consecration water for the meritorious deeds. A few days later, Bo Lin Htin was killed in action.

The da ma joun remained unfinished. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw decided to complete

construction of the da ma joun. Sayadaw contemplated that even though Bo Lin Htin was a Christian, he tried to take refuge under the Exalted One and began constructing a da ma joun.

Meanwhile, U Aw Ba-tha, a monk residing at Mee Zaing Mountain was killed by KNU's.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw began constructing the da ma joun which the brigade commander Bo Lin Htin left unfinished. The foundation stones of the da ma joun were laid on September 3, 1997. The da ma joun is 280 ft in length and 130 ft in width with 181 teak posts, valued at about K 320 lakhs. An impressive and monolithic building.

The consecration ceremony of the da ma joun was held on October 11, 1997.

There will be peace and development for those who forsake the armed struggle line and give up their arms and work in unity for the betterment of the people in the country.

* * * * *

Paya-gone Village is about 12 miles south-east of Hpa-an, a Capital City of Kayin State. On April 9, 1998, KNU Central Committee Member Phado Aung San and 350 followers exchanged arms for peace. The State warmly welcomed them and allowed settlement at Paya-gone Village.

There is a ruined pagoda at the head of Paya-gone Village. Phado Aung San is an elder of Paya-gone Village. Phado Aung San is the first cousin of Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw. Due to various reasons, Phado Aung San went underground. Now, he exchanged arms for peace and has settled at Paya-gone Village. Most of Phado Aung San's followers are Kayin Buddhists. Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Phado Aung San discussed the construction of the ruined pagoda. An agreement was reached between them and the construction of the pagoda began. The *Hti-daw* hoisting ceremony

was held on the 10th Waxing Day of Thadinkyut, 1360 ME. The name of the Pagoda is "Tha-hta Thu Kha Pagoda". It is the 73rd Pagoda that Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has built.

The successful building of the Pagoda is a sign of goodwill and benevolence, like the two rival kingdoms of Ka-pi La and Kaw-li Ya. The two kingdoms were at belligerent over the water of Yaw-ha-ni River. Buddha had foreseen that the war between the two kingdoms would result in death and destruction and He realised that this matter should not be entertained. He came down to the two rival kingdoms and delivered a peaceful preaching for the people. Preaching of Buddha brought goodwill, benevolence and understanding between the two rival kingdoms. Just like the two rival kingdoms Ka-pi La and Kaw-li Ya had peace and tranquillity, both Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Phado Aung San are working to have peace and tranquillity in the region.

"Tha-hta Thu-kha Pagoda"—"Tha-hta" means "arms" and "Thu-kha" means "peace and happiness". "Tha-hta Thu-kha Pagoda" is therefore "a Pagoda which brings peace and happiness in exchange for arms".

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw contemplated that a pagoda is already built for Kayin Buddhists. Will it be more appropriate if a church for Kayin Christians be built? Sayadaw also considered that, though we are differed in faiths we are of the same racial stock...Kayin national. Sayadaw is striving to have peace in the region so also is Phado Aung San who puts life and soul to have peace. A discussions between the two elders reached an agreement—to build a church and a monastery at Paya-gone Village.

In accord with the noble aims and objects Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw made preparation for building of a church valued at K 50 lakhs. Phado Aung San, a Christian, on the other hand, has made preparation for building of a

monastery valued at K 50 lakhs near "Tha-hta Thu-kha Pagoda."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw and Phado Aung San set their noble conviction to the posterity that all religions, for one reason or other, deserve our veneration. But while a follower strives for his religion to reach the top, he should also let other religions to rise high.

Chapter XIII

When Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw went alms round on Thai side, the devotees, tears in their eyes, supplicated to Sayadaw that, they were home-sick and wanted to return to their native land. Now they have chances and returned en masse to their land. The returnees were temporary accommodated at Myaing-gye: Ngu Monastery. Later, Sayadaw established new wards for the returnees. New dwellings were also constructed.

There were 50,000 returnees residing at the new wards. The primary, middle and high school were opened. Hospital, clinics, electricity generating station, posts and telecommunications office, sugar mill and ice factory were established. The development works have been gaining momentum.

Myaing-gye: Ngu was renamed "Sone Nant Thar Myaing Swe Myodaw".

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw put life and soul for uplifting the living standard of the people. Building of roads, schools, hospitals residential areas and medium- and small-scale industries help developed the socio-economic conditions of the people. Security in transportation bring smooth flow of commodities from one place to another. The DKBA compatriots vigilante in keeping peace and tranquility in the State. Meanwhile, Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has built 73 pagodas and 41 ordination halls. Sayadaw donated four material requisites to Samghas and fund for social welfare organisations.

To quote a few donations made by Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw to monasteries and Sarthintike and funds for social welfare organisations and renovation of religious edifices:

1. Presiding Sayadaw of
Dhamma Pi-ya Kyaungtike
-Super Roof Saloon K 600,000

2. Presiding Sayadaw of
May-dar Wi Kyaungtike (Hpa-an)
-Toyota Corolla K 300,000
3. Presiding Sayadaw of
Zabu Myaing Kyaungtike
-Pajero K 4,500,000
4. Kyaik-hti Hsaung
Sayadaw (Bilin)
-Pajero K 2,200,000
5. Joan Joan Kya Sayadaw
-Toyota Crown K 1,500,000
6. Presiding Sayadaw of
Upper Shwegun Kyaungtike
(Shwegun)
-Nissan Pick-up K 2,200,000
7. Joan Joan Kya Taw-ya
Kyaungtike (Mudon) K 1,000,000
8. Amarapura Maha Ganda-yon
Sarthintike K 300,000

9. Bago Kyat-khat Waing
Sarthintike (Bago) K 200,000
10. Shwe Hinthar Taw-ya
Kyaungtike (Nyaungdon) K 100,000
11. Kaing-gone Sarthintike
(Khayan) K 100,000
12. Insein Ywa-ma Sarthintike
(Insein, Yangon) K 100,000
13. Mayangone Middle School
(Mayangone, Yangon) K 100,000
14. May-dar Wi Kyaungtike,
Mawlamyaing
(for installation of
telephone) K 100,000
15. Joan Joan Kya Taw-ya
Sarthintike, Mudon (for tarring
of approached road) K 2,800,000

16. Tay-hta Mann-aung Pagoda,
Hpa-an (for gold gilding
and renovation) K 980,000
 17. Contruction of dama joun,
(congregation hall)
Dhamma Pi-ya
Monastery K 10,000,000
 18. Construction of dama joun,
Ah-lan Ta-ya Pagoda
(Thaton) K 3,200,000
 19. Shwe Sandaw Pagoda,
Thaton (for tiling of
Pagoda's platform) K 3,500,000
 20. Swe Chan Thar Kayin
dama joun (Northern Stairway,
Shwedagon Pagoda) K 70,000,000
- NB. U Thein Win and Daw Ni and family

(Shwe Than Lwin Construction Co., Ltd.)
donated the cost of Swe Chan Thar Kayin
dama joun)

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw also spon-
sored training courses on *Dhammacakka*, *Paritta*,
Pahtamabjan and *Pahtan* recitation courses.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw translated
the following Buddhist Scriptures into Kayin
and Myanmar Languages.

1. Essence of Buddha's
teachings Kayin Language
2. *Paritta Sutta* Kayin Language
3. *Dhammacakka* Myanmar and
Kayin Languages
4. *Anatta Letkhana Sutta* Myanmar and
Kayin Languages

5. *Maha Thamaya Sutta* Myanmar and
Kayin Languages
6. *Maha Thati Pahtana Sutta* Myanmar
and Kayin
Languages

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw has built 72 *Dhatu Cetiya*s (Pagodas)[pagodas where any one of the Buddha's personal belongings such as water strainer, girdle, robes and alms-bowl was enshrined.];

*Paribhoga Cetiya*s (Pagodas) [Sayadaw planted the seedling of Bodi Tree from Gaya, India, and built a pagoda near Bodi Tree]; and

*Udissaka Cetiya*s (Pagodas) [which the images and statues of the Buddha are enshrined. Sayadaw casts a bronze Buddha Statue—"Bai Thitsa Mu-ni Buddha Statue", and gilded with 32 viss of gold, valued at over K 182 million.]

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw keeps on shining the *Dhamma* which had flickered or extinguished in the past, in the present the people have a Light which flames and in the future there will a Light which will shine all over the Kayin State.

This shall be endowed with mindfulness.

Myaing Nan Swe

Date. July 30, 1998.

Epilogue

Most books are usually written about the eminent people. Few books on ordinary people who have not achieved material things or fame in their life, but stand tall above the people because of their high moral principle are rarely to be found. This book can be classified in the latter category.

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw search for truth and inner peace should be emulated. When people—even some *jahans*, are trying hard to gain material well-being and fame, Sayadaw has spurned wealth and fame. What he earns he gives it away and—leads a simple and contented life.

Sayadaw's undertaking of vigorous and difficult practice of *Vipassana* is awe inspiring and even in horror, which Sayadaw stands fast and firm.

In this regard I want to quote what the Buddha has taught in the *Dhammavihari Sutta*, *Pancaka Nipata* of *Anguttara Nikaya*, thus:—

"Only a person who is well versed in the Three *Pitakas* and the Five *Nikayas* and is able to comprehend with immediate in-sight the working of the Five *Khandas* in the body, is called a *Dhamma Vihari* who dwells in or according to the *Dhamma*."

Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw is a true *Dhamma Vihari Bhikkhu*.

The readers who have read this book will come to know more about Myaing-gye: Ngu Sayadaw, his life and his *Dhamma Duta* (religious itinerary) and to some extent readers' doubts and suspicions dispelled.

This book could not have been translated without generous assistance of Saya Myaing Nan Swe and publisher Mehn Ba Nyunt Pe.

Shin Khay Meinda

နိဂုံး

စာအုပ်အများစုမှာ ထင်ပေါ်ကျော်ကြားသည့် ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်များ၏အကြောင်းကို ရေးသားထုတ်ဝေကြသည်ကို ကွေ့ရှိရပေသည်။ ရုပ်ဝတ္ထု၊ ပစ္စည်းဥစ္စာနှင့် ထင်ပေါ်ကျော်ကြားမှုမရှိသော်လည်း ကိုယ်ကျင့်တရား မြင့်မြတ်ခြင်း၊ စွန့်လွှတ်ခြင်းအစရှိသည့် ဂုဏ်ရည်များကြောင့် လူအများ၏ ချီးမွမ်းစားခြင်းကိုခံရသည့် ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်များ၏အကြောင်းကို ရေးသားထုတ်ဝေသည့် စာအုပ်များမှာမူ အရေအတွက်အားဖြင့် နည်းပါးလှချေသည်။ ထိုသို့ အရေအတွက်နည်းပါးလှသော စာအုပ်အမျိုးအစားတွင် မြိုင်ကြီးငူဆရာတော်၏ ဘဝမှတ်တမ်းစာအုပ်သည် ပါဝင်ပါသည်။

မြိုင်ကြီးငူဆရာတော်သည် အမှန်တရားကို ရှာဖွေရာတွင်လည်းကောင်း၊ စိတ်ငြိမ်းချမ်းမှုကိုရရှိအောင် ကြိုးပမ်းအားထုတ်ရာတွင်လည်းကောင်း အတုယူဖွယ်ရာဖြစ်ပါသည်။ လူပုဂ္ဂိုလ်များသာမက ရဟန်းပုဂ္ဂိုလ်အချို့ပင်လျှင် ရုပ်ဝတ္ထု၊ ပစ္စည်းနှင့် ထင်ပေါ်ကျော်ကြားမှုတို့ကို ရရှိအောင် တစိုက်မတ်မတ် ကြိုးပမ်းအားထုတ်သည့်ကာလတွင် မြိုင်ကြီးငူဆရာတော်သည် ထိုအရာအားလုံးတို့ကို စွန့်လွှတ်တော်မူသည်။

ဆရာတော်သည် ဘဝကို ရိုးရိုးသားသားနှင့် တင်းတိမ်ရောင့်ရဲမှုကို ကျင့်ကြံအားထုတ်နေထိုင်တော်မူသည်။

မြိုင်ကြီးငူဆရာတော်သည် အများလူငါတို့ ကျင့်ကြံအားထုတ်နိုင်ရန် ခက်ခဲသည့် ခုရကျင့်စဉ်ကို ကျင့်ကြံအားထုတ်ရာတွင် စံနမူနာယူဖွယ်ရာဖြစ်ပါသည်။ ဆရာတော်သည် ကျင့်ကြံအားထုတ်ရန် ခက်ခဲသည့် ခုရကျင့်စဉ်ကို ကျင့်ရာတွင် ကြိုလာရတတ်သည့် အဖျက်အဆီးတို့ကိုလည်း ကြံ့ကြံ့ခံနိုင်ရည်စွမ်းရှိသည်။

ယင်းကိစ္စနှင့်စပ်လျဉ်း၍ ဗုဒ္ဓဟောကြားတော်မူသော အင်္ဂုတ္တိုရ်နိကာယ်၊ ဓမ္မဝိဟာရီသုတ်၊ ပဉ္စနိပါတ်တွင် ဖော်ပြထားသည်ကို ရည်ညွှန်းလိုပါသည်။

“အကြင်ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်သည် ပိဋကတ်သုံးပုံနှင့် နိကာယ်ငါးရပ်ကို တတ်သိကျွမ်းကျင်၏။ ခန္ဓာငါးပါးဖြစ်ပျက်မှုအစဉ်တို့ကို ကျင့်ကြံအားထုတ်ခြင်းကြောင့် ထွင်းဖောက်သိမြင်တော်မူ၏။ ထိုပုဂ္ဂိုလ်သည် ဓမ္မဝိဟာရီဘိက္ခုမည်ပေသည်။”

မြိုင်ကြီးငူဆရာတော်သည် ဓမ္မဝိဟာရီဘိက္ခုဖြစ်ပေသည်။

စာဖတ်သူသည် ဤစာအုပ်ကို ဖတ်ရှုခြင်းဖြင့်
မြိုင်ကြီးငူ ဆရာတော်၏ ဘဝမှတ်တမ်းနှင့် ဓမ္မဒူတခရီးစဉ်ကို
အထိုက် အလျောက် သိရှိနားလည်ခြင်းကြောင့် ယခင်က
ရှိပြီးဖြစ်သော ယုံမှားသံသယများ ကင်းစင်ပျောက်မည်
ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

ဤစာအုပ်ကို ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုရာတွင် ဆရာမြိုင်
နန်းဆွေနှင့် ထုတ်ဝေသူ မန်းဘညွန့်ဖေတို့၏ ကူညီ ထောက်ပံ့
မှုတို့ကြောင့် ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုနိုင်ခဲ့ခြင်းဖြစ်သည်ကို ဖော်ပြ
လိုပါသည်။

ရှင်ဇေမိန္ဒ