



Animal behaviour

INSIDE
THE PULSE



HEARTBEAT OF THE NATION

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MYANMAR TIMES

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A DKBA soldier stands near the group's Kayin State headquarters on October 29.
Photo: Zarni Phyo

GNU stalls on proposal to unify Kayin armed groups

The formation of the Kawthoolei Armed Forces has hit a snag, with the Karen National Union offering only "in-principle" support until its 2016 congress.

MORE ON NEWS 6

NEWS 3

Stability focus of historic meeting

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hold talks for the first time, together with the country's most senior political figures.

NEWS 4

USDP courts, then spurns, Rohingya voters

The USDP promised Muslims in Rakhine State a better future in exchange for votes in 2010 - promises that appear to have evaporated in the aftermath of communal violence.

NEWS 10

Hundreds to vie for spots in municipal vote

Yangon City Development Committee's December election has attracted hundreds of candidates - ranging from activists and civil society leaders to property developers.

PROFILE 16-17

Gambira's new fight

He rose to prominence during the 2007 protests but spent the next four years in prison, where he was brutally tortured. Now the former monk has a new struggle: overcoming post-traumatic stress disorder, a legacy of his time behind bars.

BUSINESS 26

MEHL wins brewery arbitration dispute

Arbitration body decides in favour of Myanmar Economic Holding Limited in dispute with Singapore's Fraser & Neave, giving the army-owned firm the chance to buy market leader Myanmar Brewery Limited outright.

Inside the rice import freeze

In an exclusive report, *The Myanmar Times* visits the warehouses and unofficial border crossings of Muse, where business has ground to a halt in the aftermath of China's decision to ban rice imports. [BUSINESS 29](#)



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Page 2

THE INSIDER: The local lowdown & best of the web

Lack of birth documentation thwarts woman's hopes for official recognition

A petition spread online last week, pushing for Mandalay region woman Daw Mya Kyi to be officially recognised by Guinness World Records as the world's oldest, as she shuffles toward what petition organizers say is to be her 118th birthday.

This is one of those stories that does the rounds from time to time, and obviously gets a bit more interesting every year. *The Myanmar Times* reported in 2012 that she was 120, but that this is not recognised by international groups such as the

Gerontology Research Group or Guinness World Records because of a lack of reliable documentary evidence.

In the past, some local media outlets have reported she was 15 at the time King Thibaw was forced into exile. This would make her a whopping 145 which, frankly, seems unlikely. Without proper documentation, it's very difficult to say. It's also been widely reported that she has a lot of chickens.

Apparently Daw Mya Kyi does not particularly enjoy all of the attention visited on her by virtue of being really, really old, and prefers the company of her avian pals.

The revolution will not be televised

Three masked activists staged a protest, albeit a brief one, at the Shwegondaing overpass on October 26, distributing anti-government leaflets and hanging a banner that read "Let's start a people's revolution".

That didn't appear to work immediately, and *The Irrawaddy* reported they left the area after a matter of minutes. The trio that conducted this act of protest identify with the Anonymous movement's local wing, an anarchic collective of "hacktivists" that spouts internet-assembled philosophies and is united under the mask of the Guy Fawkes figure in *V for Vendetta*.

It seems the members of this opted not to sport the official mask – which may well be a nod to the movement's anti-capitalist sentiment, given Time Warner owns the rights to the V image and receives a cut of every mask sale.

Typically, Anonymous activities are conducted online because they're, you know, Anonymous. Given the risk of getting caught and having the book thrown at them, this was fairly bold.

This was at least the second public display of dissidence from the group, who's done anti-government graffiti downtown and logs its activities online.

Needle exchange rate driven by international speculation

A story from *Global Post* about a new-ish report by the Kachin Women's Association of Thailand about the state's heroin epidemic managed to draw broader attention to the issue last week, by seizing on one fairly minor detail in the text's body and blowing it up in the headline "Heroin use is so high in Myanmar that syringes now serve as currency".

It made news around the world, with *Global Post's* sharp observation being regurgitated under sensationalist headlines such as *USA Today's* "Syringes are now currency in heroin-addicted Myanmar" or *The International Business Times'* "Myanmar drug problem so severe heroin syringes used as change", or the ethnographically-incorrect-from-the-usually-more-careful *Washington Post*: "the Burmese do so much heroin that syringes are used for currency".

At this stage, it doesn't look as if the kyat will be replaced entirely, although as of print time the Central Bank had yet to issue comment. The scale of the issues surrounding heroin use in Kachin State is, undeniably, shocking. However, giving goods as change is not exactly anything new and that kind of sensationalism somewhat detracts from some of the report's more pointed revelations.



Updates on rice, Nuremberg and Aung San's new-year message, April 13, 1947.

Overheard in Traders

"Wait ... what do you mean, you 'bought a plane'?" – exasperated foreign businessman to local partner

In brief

Phuket tiger that mauled Australian tourist "obviously not drugged heavily enough"

Sightings of the rare red panda likely to increase in the short-term, say experts, as unchecked logging leaves

them "nowhere to hide" Would-be bank robber dismisses heist as "totally impossible in this traffic" at crime syndicate brainstorming session

Yangon ranks alongside Fox Glacier and the dunes of the Sahara in wheelchair accessibility study

Next week

"Voluntourist" has "a really inspiring time" on the border, great new Facebook profile photo

"I was in Yangon, Bagan and the Shan state this summer and never saw anything to suggest anything like this. I was never offered drugs of any kind, no attempts to sell to me... I only mention this because I feel like my appearance is a target for that kind of activity: dude w/full sleeve tattoos, I've been offered hash and dope all over the world, Portugal, Morocco, Berlin, Mongolia... but nothing of the sort in Myanmar. Never saw a needle anywhere."

– One-time tourist on Reddit dismisses the veracity of the *Global Post* story based on the fact no one in Nyaung Shwe (in "the Shan State") offered him smack despite 'being inked'

Once was Burma...

From the Pansodan Gallery archives

Golden Hammer Journal, Harvest edition, 1971

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Political stability, military dominate historic meeting



EI EI TOE LWIN HTOO THANT

MYANMAR'S leading political figures have reached agreement on the continued role of the military in politics and the desire for political stability, according to those present at an historic meeting last week.

The October 31 meeting at President U Thein Sein's residence in Nay Pyi Taw brought together the president, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann and Union Election Commission chief U Tin Aye, as well as the leaders of four other political parties.

It was the first encounter of its kind since the military took power in 1988. Talks focused on three main issues: continuing the reform process, achieving national reconciliation and maintaining stability.

All agreed to amend constitution in parliament, presidential spokesperson U Ye Htut told reporters at a press conference afterward, adding that "no one wants people to take to the streets".

"It is a good result," he said.

He added that Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing told political leaders he agreed on the need to amend the 2008 constitution, and suggested that some changes might be up for negotiation.

"The commander-in-chief said that sometimes, in the legislative process, the majority won through votes even though the minority is right, so we need to solve it in the right way," said U Ye Htut.

The meeting was Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's first formal encounter with the commander-in-chief. U Ye Htut said she told Senior General Min Aung Hlaing she always respects the



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in Nay Pyi Taw on October 31. Photo: President's Office

Tatmadaw, even though they have differing views on many issues.

U Khin Maung Swe, who took part in the meeting as the head of the National Democratic Force, said all present understood that the Tatmadaw would continue to stay in national politics.

He added that while they discussed amending the constitution, no one discussed section 436, which gives the military a veto over constitutional change. Participants also urged the government to reach agreement with armed ethnic groups on a nationwide ceasefire "as soon as possible" and to create a framework for political dialogue.

"We all agreed to maintain the current results we've achieved, not to deviate away from the democratic transition, and that we need stable political conditions to hold the 2015 election," U Khin Maung Swe said.

During the press conference, U Ye

Htut said the nationwide ceasefire would be signed at the end of 2014 or in early 2015. The government will hold free and fair elections next year in cooperation with civil society, the media and international organisations.

Invitations for the meeting were sent out on October 29, and came as something of a surprise given the president had rejected previous requests from Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

'We all agreed ... we need stable political conditions to hold the 2015 election.'

U Khin Maung Swe
National Democratic Force

for a high-level meeting to discuss the constitution.

Some observers said they believed the timing of the meeting was significant as MPs are debating amendments to the 2008 constitution and preparations are in train for next month's ASEAN summit in Nay Pyi Taw.

"Agreement among political leaders over the political barriers we are now facing would be very helpful. Previous rounds of negotiations didn't really get anywhere," said U Aye Thar Aung, vice chair of the Rakhine National Party.

Political analyst U Yan Myo Thein said the meeting could help pave the way for future political dialogue "but the talks will be in vain if this is just window-dressing for President Obama's visit. We will have to wait and see," he said.

U Ye Htut insisted that the meeting had nothing to do with external issues.

"[This meeting] was not held for anyone else," he said.

Women dominate president's scholarship

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WOMEN could be set to dominate the upper reaches of the country's future civil service as female candidates for prestigious scholarships outnumber male candidates by five to one. Of the 5000 hopefuls who have applied to join the President's Scholarship program, which aims to create an elite cadre of civil service high-flyers by funding their education abroad, more than 4000 are women and only 866 are male.

Critics say the reason for the imbalance is the rule that applicants must remain single until the scholarship is awarded. Applicants must be Myanmar citizens who are the children of two Myanmar citizens.

President U Thein Sein launched the program in July to increase the capacity of the civil service. Aspirations are high, with most candidates - 2006 - applying for PhD courses, while 1848 are going for Master's degrees and only 658 for bachelor degrees.

Candidates will sit an English-language test between December 6 and 12 in Yangon, Mandalay, Magwe, Monywa, Taunggyi and Mawlamyine. Those who pass will then be given a psychological test and interview.

Successful candidates must return and work as civil servants for at least twice as long as they studied abroad, or repay three times the cost of their scholarship. The scholarships will be awarded to study any subject and will cover the entire cost of tuition.

It remains unclear how many scholarships will be awarded, which universities candidates will attend, and how much the program will cost. Public servants are allowed to apply only with the permission of their ministry.



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ANALYSIS

How the USDP went from courting to spurning Rakhine State's Muslims

BILL
O'TOOLE

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IN the lead-up to the 2010 general election, the Union Solidarity and Development Party faced a problem in Rakhine State.

Replicating their strategy elsewhere in the country, they sought to recruit influential locals to stand as candidates in the election, which was touted by the military as a key step in the nation's road to democracy. However, they ran into well-organised opposition from the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party.

Though established just a few months earlier, following the release of election laws in March, the RNDP had managed to generate significant local support by tapping into widespread animosity toward the central government from ethnic Rakhine.

The USDP needed allies in the region. Controversially, they turned to the Rohingya.

"USDP approached us, they said we should participate," said U Shwe Maung, a community leader who became the USDP representative for Buthidaung in the Pyithu Hluttaw. "They said, 'The government has changed its policy [toward Rohingya rights].'"

Several Sittwe residents who identify as Rohingya told *The Myanmar Times* last week that USDP delegations from Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon made several high-profile visits to their communities, and promised that voting for



A Muslim woman sits in front of temporary shelters in Sittwe township, Rakhine State. Photo: Ko Taik

the military-aligned party would usher in a new era of freedoms and rights for the Muslim minority.

"Of course, they gave many promises at that time," recalled a former civil servant who self-identifies as Rohingya and asked not to be named. "They said, 'You can get Rohingya [citizenship] cards; ... so that the people would vote for them.'"

U Aung Win, a Rohingya activist based in Sittwe, said the message was always the same: "You can live

peacefully and you can cooperate with the government ... [if you] vote for the USDP."

This generated legitimate popular support for the USDP in Rohingya communities, and several Muslim candidates were elected: U Shwe Maung and two others into the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw, and three more into the Rakhine State parliament.

The RNDP, however, still fared better than any other ethnic minority party in terms of the proportion of seats

won. The party, which merged with the Arakan League for Democracy to become the Rakhine National Party in 2013, took out 35 of the 44 seats it contested in state and national legislatures.

The Muslim representatives and their constituents had upheld their part of the bargain. However, they say the government put in place by the USDP has turned its back on them.

"In that context we joined the USDP," said U Shwe Maung. "Since we became elected in 2010 we have pushed [Rohingya citizenship rights]. Then [when] the Ministry of Immigration started to say 'no' ... we were confused."

U Shwe Maung said that discussion about the Rohingya in parliament became all but impossible after June 2012, when Buddhist and Muslim communities clashed around Sittwe. Another outbreak of violence that year took the death toll above 200 and left more than 100,000 displaced, mostly Muslims.

"Since 2012 June this issue became very hot, and Rakhine MPs keep giving pressure to the Union government, the parliament and the media."

The Rohingya politicians are now facing perhaps their toughest political challenge: a series of amendments to electoral laws proposed by the RNP that would strip those holding temporary identity documents, known as white cards, from taking part in political activities, including voting and joining a party.

While the amendments do not single out the Rohingya, they hold the majority of the white cards issued by the government. If approved, the laws would strip more than 1 million people of the right to vote in Rakhine State alone.

The first of these amendments – to ban white-card holders from forming or joining a political party – was passed in September, with support from the USDP.

Another RNP proposal that would remove all voting rights from white card-holders and naturalised citizens appears to be gaining traction with the USDP leadership.

One member of the RNP, who asked not to be named, said his party had already engaged in informal talks with the USDP over the text of the amendment.

According to the MP, the USDP has no issue with taking voting rights away from white-card holders, but would like the law to be amended to ensure all other citizen categories still have the right to vote.

The MP said the proposal had been submitted to the hluttaw office but because the parliament has a full agenda this session – including lengthy discussions over constitutional change and electoral reform – he suspects the bill will not be discussed until the first session of 2015.

The office of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann – who is also chair of the USDP – did not respond to requests for comment last week.

USDP central committee member U Hla Swe said his personal view was that the party "must follow the desire of the majority" but declined to discuss the issue further.

Asked about his party's campaign in Rakhine state in 2010, U Hla Swe downplayed USDP efforts to court Muslim voters and claimed white-card holders only accounted for a small proportion of the votes the USDP received.

White-card holders concerned about losing voting rights could apply for citizenship under the nation's 1982 Citizenship Law, he said.

"I want to suggest that they should apply ... as soon as possible because it is sure that they become [citizens]."

However, Rohingya community leaders say the white-card issue has arisen only because the government has not properly implemented the citizenship law. When the government switched from National Registration Cards to Citizenship Scrutiny Cards in the early 1990s, it refused to issue CSCs to many Muslims in Rakhine State, they said. Several years later it began issuing white cards, which are not mentioned in the law.

'The USDP approached us, they said ... the government has changed its policy [toward Rohingya rights].'

U Shwe Maung
Rohingya Pyithu Hluttaw MP

The Rohingya civil servant said both he and his wife hold CSCs but their adult children have only been issued white cards, despite applying for citizenship documentation more than a decade ago. Under the 1982 law, the child of two CSC holders is automatically entitled to citizenship.

U Shwe Maung said he was disappointed that the promises of 2010 had never been upheld but said he believes the fault lies with the government and Ministry of Immigration rather than the USDP.

"I am disappointed with the government, especially with the Immigration Department," he said. "They are a powerful department with the full power to tackle these issues."

But others see political motivations in the USDP's backtracking on promises to Rohingya voters. Richard Horsey, a Yangon-based political analyst, said that anti-Muslim sentiment – in both Rakhine and other parts of the country – could result in the USDP turning away from the voters it once actively courted.

"Given the rise of Burman-Buddhist nationalism," he said, "the USDP may decide that the Rohingya vote brings more problems than benefits."

– Additional reporting by
Ei Ei Toe Lwin

NTNU – Trondheim
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KNU moves to delay unification talks

Karen National Union offers 'in-principle' support but formal decision may not be made until the group's 2016 congress



YE MON

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THE proposed unification of Kayin ethnic armed groups into the Kawthoolei Armed Forces continues to stir controversy, with the Karen National Union attempting to put off any decision on the creation of the coalition until 2016.

The four proposed members met for two days of negotiations at the headquarters of the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA) in Kayin State on October 29-30 but left only with the promise of further talks.

While participants approved the creation of the KAF on the first day of the meeting, October 29, the KNU said its agreement was in principle only.

KNU chief of mission Colonel Saw Phaw Doe said further organisational details should be left to the 16th KNU Congress in 2016. "We've already organised the Karen Forces Unity Committee, and it has been working," he told last week's meeting.

Further talks on the KAF were scheduled for November 19 but Major General Saw Muu Shae, deputy chief of mission of the DKBA, told *The Myanmar Times* his group wanted a



Two members of the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army walk near the group's headquarters last week. Photo: Zarni Phyo

decision from the KNU this year.

"Some Karen armed group leaders did not attend this meeting. The leaders need to discuss the formation of the KAF this year. We requested [the KNU] not to postpone [a decision] until 2016," he said.

Representatives of the DKBA and other groups pushed the KNU

delegation to agree to hold an emergency congress this year to decide on the issue. The KNU officials responded that they did not have the authority to agree to such a proposal, Maj Gen Saw Muu Shae said.

"If the KNU doesn't hold an emergency congress meeting in this year we will meet obstacles to forming the

KAF because the leaders of both the KNU and the government will change in 2016," he said.

The KAF was formed on October 13 by representatives of the KNU's military wing, the Kayin National Liberation Army, as well as the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army, the KNU/KNLA Peace Council and another

KNU-affiliated group, the Karen National Defence Organisation.

However, in the days afterward, leaders of the KNU, the DKBA and the KNU/KNLA Peace Council distanced themselves from the proposal and said the agreement had been signed without their permission.

Maj Gen Saw Muu Shae said now was the right time to press on with the plan, adding that the KNU had previously rejected efforts to unify Kayin armed groups.

"We met with the KNU secretly in 2007 to form the KAF, but they did not agree. The same happened in 2009. The KNU may decide in favour of the KAF in 2016, but we believe we should form it now," he said.

The leaders of the KNLA, the KNDO, the DKBA and the KNU/KNLA Peace Council said the creation of the KAF was not meant to give advantage to any single group.

"The KAF is concerned with all Karen people," said U Tin Mo Thi, the representative of KNU/KNLA Peace Council.

U Tin Mo Thi said Kayin people wanted to form the KAF so that all Karen ethnic groups could work together.

"The KAF is the future of Karen youth, and a force for all Karen people. Most Karen youth want to form the KAF quickly," said a representative of Karen Youth Network.

UNFC exit set to continue for Karen National Union

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LEADERS of the Karen National Union (KNU) have decided against re-joining an umbrella organisation set up to represent armed ethnic groups, after suspending its membership in late August.

At an emergency meeting convened in its Laewar headquarters in Hlaingbwe township, Kayin State, the

organisation's central committee voted to continue to boycott the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC).

Participants in the meeting, which took place from October 23 to 29, discussed whether it would be better to maintain solidarity among ethnic opponents of the government, or to go it alone.

The KNU wants to restructure the UNFC, an alliance of 12 ethnic groups that held its first conference in Chiang

Mai, Thailand, from August 25 to September 2. The KNU walked out while the UNFC was still discussing its basic principles and structure, which the KNU argues is too restrictive and impedes the ability of member organisations to manage their own affairs.

"If we could renegotiate the structure, we would consider re-engaging. But we will not give authority to another organisation," said KNU central committee member

Padoh Mahn Mahn.

Despite KNU's self-suspension from UNFC, it has pledged continued cooperation with other ethnic armed groups in the nationwide ceasefire process.

KNU leaders also discussed the recent formation of a joint Kayin fighting organisation, the Kawthoolei Armed Forces (KAF), which seeks to bring together the sometimes divergent Kayin armed groups.

At a separate meeting in Kayin State last week, KNU representatives attempted to put off a decision on the formation of the KAF until 2016.

The formation of KAF, bringing together the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the KNU/KNLA Peace Council and the Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO), was announced on October 13.

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Buddhist group plans marriage bill protests

Demonstrations will be held to pressure government to enact law next year

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PEOPLE across the country will take to the streets in favour of a controversial bill that could force people to change their religion, senior Buddhist clerics have warned. The so-called interfaith marriage bill proposes a ban on marriage between Buddhist women and men of other faiths but has attracted widespread criticism from rights groups.

Yangon Region members of the Committee for the Protection of Nationality and Religion, known as Ma Ba Tha, met last week at Shwedagon Pagoda to discuss the issue. The organisation's chair, U Tilawkarviwunsa of Insein Ywarma Monastery, told reporters the bill would help avoid racial and religious conflict, and called for mass support to ensure it is passed before President U Thein Sein leaves office.

Magwe Sayadaw U Parmaukkha, a Ma Ba Tha central committee member, said the law would only bring Buddhism into line with other religions, which also forbid their members to marry non-believers.

"But Buddhism has no such restriction, and the interfaith bill is not restricted to Buddhist women. Its aim is only to protect women from being forced to change their religion," he said. "It will not discriminate against

any race or religion, or infringe on democracy or international human rights standards."

Ma Ba Tha members say the new bill would protect women from pressure to convert to their husband's religion, protection they say is not provided by an existing marriage law introduced in 1954.

But local and international rights groups have condemned the proposed law, warning that its introduction would violate the right of a Buddhist woman to choose her husband and be "a disgraceful act that would invite international ridicule".

The interfaith marriage bill is one of four pieces of draft legislation proposed by Ma Ba Tha, together with laws on religious conversion, monogamy and population control. President U Thein Sein forwarded the drafts to the hluttaw for approval on February 25, urging MPs to enact

'It will not discriminate against any race or religion.'

U Parmaukkha
Ma Ba Tha committee member

them. But two days later, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann sent the drafts back to the government to be rewritten.

In response, the president set up a 12-member commission on March 7, headed by Deputy Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo, to draft new bills by June 30. However, that deadline has passed and committee members have refused to speak to the media about when the bills might be finalised.

Some MPs have criticised the president and parliament for "playing volleyball" with the drafts, while others called them a "weapon" to advance political interests in advance of the 2015 election.

But another speaker at last week's rally, Mya Zedi Sayadaw, said opponents needed "to understand the conditions of Myanmar culture and the history of religion in Asia".

He said the law was required because of pressure from Myanmar's neighbours, India and China, the most populous countries in the world. "And Bangladesh is only the size of Shan State, but has 70 million people," he said. "So passing the interfaith law is absolutely necessary."

Dhamacakka U Maung Maung, chair of the Vamsanurakkhita Association of Myanmar, spoke of Buddhist wives facing "torture" and other human rights violations at the hands of their non-Buddhist husbands.



Natsuo Miyashita holds the audio guides that her company donated to the National Museum at a ceremony last week. Photo: Cherry Thein

Japanese firm donates audio guides to museum

CHERRY THEIN
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A JAPANESE company has donated audio guides to the National Museum in Yangon to help visitors deepen their understanding of the exhibits.

The 42 devices provided by Miyashita are valued at more than US\$30,000. They offer commentaries in Myanmar, English, Japanese and Chinese for 30 of the 2000 items on display.

Miyashita president Natsuo Miyashita said the aim was to explain Myanmar traditional culture, customs and heritage to the world. "Foreign visitors will be able to understand and appreciate the

significance of the collection, and derive the same inspiration I found 40 years ago when I first encountered Myanmar art," she said.

Ms Miyashita became familiar with Myanmar art while studying in London in 1973. She decided to donate the audio system when a friend working for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) introduced her to the museum.

Thanking her for the contribution, museum director U Ngwe Tun Myint said, "The system is a bit costly, but we will expand it in future depending on our budget."

Visitors hiring an audio unit are required to hand over an ID document.

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Mandalay residents participate in a candlelight protest over the death of journalist Ko Par Gyi. Photo: Si Thu Lwin

Activists charged after protesting reporter death

Organisers of protests in Yangon and Mandalay could face up to one year in prison under peaceful protest law



SI THU LWIN LUN MIN MANG

ACTIVISTS from Yangon and Mandalay are to be charged for holding unauthorised protests over the death of freelance journalist Ko Par Gyi in military custody.

In Yangon, more than 40 civil society organisations took part in a demonstration outside City Hall on October 26.

Activist Ko Moe Thway, a member of Generation Wave, said he had been charged by Kyauktada township

police, who also told him other leaders are likely to face charges.

“After some journalists told me about it, I called Kyauktada township police and they confirmed I would be charged. They said they would inform me officially later, but I still haven’t heard anything,” he said.

Kyauktada township police could not be reached for comment. The charges carry a potential one-year jail term.

In upper Myanmar, activists from Mandalay, Monywa, Taunggyi and Lashio staged a candlelight protest in Mandalay on October 27 calling on the government to reveal the true circumstances surrounding the death of Ko Par Gyi, whose real name was Ko Aung Kyaw Naing.

The protest was held at the corner of 80th and 26th streets beside Mandalay’s moat. Organiser Ko Aye Thein said the death of the journalist at the hands of the Tatmadaw was an issue of concern for all citizens.

“We called for the truth to be revealed about this unfair case. If we just ignore it, the situation will get worse,” he said.

A police major from Aung Myay Thar San township said permission to hold the protest had been refused, but declined to say why.

Ko Aye Thein said he was unconcerned about the charges.

“It is their business whether they say we are allowed to do it or not,” he said. “I don’t care if I am sent to jail.”

During the protest, police tried to

obstruct demonstrators but did not forcibly break up the rally.

“Our protest is not only for Ko Par Gyi, who was killed by the military. It is about ensuring rule of law ... If we don’t protest, anyone could be killed just like him.”

Political groups said they plan to hold further events to protest the death of Ko Par Gyi, who was detained by the Tatmadaw in Mon State’s Kyaikmayaw township on September 30 while covering fighting between the military and the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army.

He died in military custody on October 4 but the Tatmadaw only released information about his death on October 23.

– Translation by Thiri Min Htun

Police accept complaint from wife of slain journalist

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POLICE at Kyaikmayaw in Mon State have accepted a complaint from the wife of journalist Ko Par Gyi, who was shot and killed while in military custody earlier this month.

Ma Thandar told *The Myanmar Times* that she had tried to file a complaint that her husband was missing on October 19, four days before the military revealed he had been killed.

However, police agreed to accept the complaint on October 26, she said.

“I tried to file the complaint and the lawsuit earlier but the officer in charge told me that they had been

ordered not to accept the complaint or any request for legal action. When I asked who the ‘higher organisation’ was, he said he had also been told not to say,” she said.

The military said on October 23 that Ko Par Gyi, a freelance journalist, had been shot dead on October 4 when he tried to escape military custody by grabbing a gun from a guard.

He had been detained by the Tatmadaw in Mon State’s Kyaikmayaw township on September 30 while covering fighting between the military and the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army.

Ma Thandar said a military representative had contacted her briefly two days after the Tatmadaw released the statement about his death.

“On the evening of October 25, I received a call from an officer who introduced himself as being from

‘The officer in charge told me they had been ordered not to accept the complaint or any request for legal action.’

Ma Thandar
Wife of Ko Par Gyi

Southeast Region Command and said he wanted to discuss Ko Par Gyi’s case. I told him that this was a police case and I needn’t talk with [the military]. I asked for his name and rank. He never answered – he just said ‘sorry’ several times and then the conversation ended,” Ma Thandar said.

The killing has prompted condemnation and protests in both Yangon and Mandalay.

On October 26, hundreds of Yangon residents and representatives of more than 40 civil society organisations gathered near Sule Pagoda to call for an independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Ko Par Gyi, whose real name was Ko Aung Kyaw Naing.

President orders investigation

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“The military accused Ko Par Gyi of being a communication officer with the rank of captain in the KKO. I reject that accusation – he was not,” Ko Ko Aung said.



"I have a big question for the military: Have there been any other cases in which a member of an ethnic armed group was killed and the Myanmar army offered support to

The 88 Generation Peace and

The Myanmar Press Council (Interim) also released a statement in which it said the Tatmadaw should release information in a more timely and transparent manner.

"We call on the government to conduct a credible and transparent investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death, and to hold the perpetrators accountable," the US embassy in Yangon said. — *Tim McLaughlin*

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'Hundreds' register for municipal vote

A total of 115 positions – including four spots on YCDC – will be up for grabs in what appears likely to be a hotly contested election



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YANGON City Development Committee is expected to this week release a list of approved candidates for its December election, which will see 115 positions – including four on its central committee – up for grabs.

Candidates are thought to range from property developers to civil society activists, although political party members and serving YCDC officials are banned.

A spokesperson for the YCDC election commission said “hundreds” of applications had been received by the October 24 deadline to register.

He added that candidates should not be involved in political parties. “If they want to compete in the YCDC election, they have to bring a letter showing they have resigned from their parties. Also, YCDC staff can compete for the post they like but they have to resign from YCDC first,” he said.

U Win Cho, an activist for the rights of farmers and homeless, said he applied on deadline day to contest for a seat on YCDC.

“I was set free from prison four days ago and heard about the YCDC election from my friends so I applied for a seat in committee,” he said.

“The main reason I decided to contest is that I don’t like people from the military ruling the committee. Most YCDC places are for military people. I want to show them that civilians can also work hard for the city’s development.”

As *The Myanmar Times* has previously reported, the YCDC election by-law originally would have allowed only 1.5 percent of eligible voters – around 30,000 altogether, according to YCDC – to vote. However, following public criticism this was later expanded to one vote per household, ensuring an estimated 800,000 voters.

Four seats on the nine-member



Activist U Win Cho, who has registered to contest a seat on YCDC, leads a land rights protest in November 2012. Photo: Boothee

YCDC will be selected through a vote – one from each of Yangon’s four districts – while 12 will be for the four district development committees and 99 for the 33 township development committees. YCDC oversees 20 departments

‘As a civilian, I experience the same problems as everyone else each day ... I think I could help to solve them.’

Daw Susanna Hla Hla Soe
YCDC election candidate

that manage municipal affairs in urban Yangon.

The official said the commission will oversee the distribution of information about the election and the creation of electoral rolls, and described awareness-raising efforts conducted to date as extensive.

“We have notified each township and ward administration office, and township YCDC office, and instructed them to post announcements about the election,” the official said.

“Ward administrators are announcing it every night in every street. We published notices in state-run newspaper and the committee’s newspaper, *City News*. We also held a press conference and will give reporters all the information they need.”

But a number of Yangon residents interviewed by *The Myanmar Times* said they knew little about the vote or

why it was being held.

“I just heard about it when the township administrator and his people came and asked for the name of who will vote from our household,” said Daw Theingi, a housewife from Thingangyun. “But I still don’t understand clearly about the election ... They didn’t explain much. I have no idea why they would hold an election.”

Daw Khin Mar, a teacher from Dagon township, said she had heard nightly announcements from the local administration staff about the election but knew few details.

Despite the confusion, the election commission official said he believed there would be “100 percent” public interest by the time the vote is held on December 27.

“YCDC is the main committee to serve people. We supply water, collect waste, clean drains and build new

roads. Even when people die, we take care of it,” he said, referring to YCDC’s management of cemeteries.

“Almost everything that happens in Yangon related to the committee so the public will be very interested in our election.”

Contestants will be allowed to campaign in their electorate, whether it is city-wide, or a district or township, he said.

Candidates face a range of fairly standard campaign restrictions. They are not allowed to offer or accept bribes, disturb other’s electoral rights, incite violence, use race or religion, or slander opponents or organisations.

The official insisted the election would be conducted in a transparent manner although there would be no monitoring of voting inside ballot stations.

“Everyone will be able to watch from outside the polling station. All reporters can interview candidates outside the stations.”

U Yan Win, a spokesperson for the National League for Democracy (NLD), said he had not heard of any members quitting to contest the election.

However, he said the party would support their decision.

“If someone wants to contest it could be a good thing ... I am happy that civilians have a chance to be involved in an organisation like YCDC,” he said. “It appears to be an improvement” on the old system of appointing rather than electing officials, he added.

Another who has applied to contest a seat on YCDC is Daw Susanna Hla Hla Soe of the Karen Women’s Action Group. She said that if elected she would focus on finding solutions to the city’s liveability challenges.

“As a civilian, I experience the same problems as everyone else each day: the terrible traffic, waste disposal system and flooding,” she said. “If I am a member of the committee, I think I could help to solve them.”

She said YCDC officials are going to meet candidates in person in the coming days. “We don’t know what the campaign process will be ... so I think they will tell us in detail at that time.”



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Wake up and smell the ‘budding rose’, UN rep tells rapporteur

Government continues public push to end more than two decades of resolutions on human rights situation



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MYANMAR’S top diplomat at the United Nations has reiterated calls for the country to be dropped from the group’s human rights agenda, as he accused the international community of overlooking the reforms undertaken by the government over the past three years.

Speaking in response to the report of the UN special rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, Myanmar’s permanent representative to the UN U Kyaw Tin said “significant changes” had taken place since President U Thein Sein came to office in March 2011.

‘We regret to say that the special rapporteur has set her eyes only on the thorns, but failed to shed light on the beauty of [the] budding rose.’

U Kyaw Tin

Myanmar’s permanent representative to the UN

“We regret to say that the special rapporteur has set her eyes only on the thorns, but failed to shed light on the beauty of [the] budding rose,” said U Kyaw Tin, who is known for his flowery language.

“Myanmar continues to face never-ending pressures for perfection. The country is now open. Everyone can visit Myanmar to see for themselves. In our view, the United Nations no longer needs any mandate to report



UN special rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar Yanghee Lee speaks to reporters at Yangon International Airport on July 26. Photo: AFP

on the situation of Myanmar,” U Kyaw Tin said on October 28.

Ms Lee told members of the UN Third Meeting during a presentation of her first report on Myanmar the same day that while she welcomed reforms that have taken place there were still numerous issues that have not yet been adequately addressed by the government.

“More is required if gains are to be genuine, sustainable and win the support of the people of Myanmar,” she said.

Ms Lee said that she was particularly troubled by the situation in Rakhine State, where she said that the humanitarian situation for those in IDP

camps remains “profoundly disturbing”. While both Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims were suffering, Ms Lee said, the situation for Rohingyas – whom the government insists on calling Bengalis – was worse.

“The long history of discrimination against the community that identifies themselves as Rohingya further compounds human rights violations.”

U Kyaw Tin did not respond to this criticism specifically but he did say that the government was taking steps to address citizenship-related issues in Rakhine State through a verification process.

Rakhine State government officials, however, told *The Myanmar Times*

last week that the citizenship pilot being undertaken in Myebon township had been postponed on October 24. While no reason was given, residents in the area complained that some Rohingyas were mis-identifying themselves as Kaman, an officially recognised ethnic group, to aid their quest for citizenship.

U Kyaw Tin also dismissed Ms Lee’s concerns regarding the 2015 election and constitutional reform as domestic issues.

Over the past two years, Nay Pyi Taw has become increasingly vocal in its desire for UN resolutions, adopted annually since 1992, to be dropped and for the role of the special rapporteur to be reduced or abolished.

During a speech in Milan, Italy, on October 17, President U Thein Sein said Myanmar had made “considerable progress in human rights protection ... but the international community has not recognised the progress enough”. A similar call was made by Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin during the opening of the UN General Debate last month.

But the European Union, which has drafted the recent resolutions, has said that it will do so again this year despite objections from some EU member countries.

A spokesperson from the EU embassy in Yangon said the resolution text is expected to be adopted by November 26, when the Third Committee is scheduled to close.

“Discussions in New York between co-sponsors and the Myanmar government are currently ongoing,” Colin Steinbach, the head of the embassy’s political, press and information section, told *The Myanmar Times* last week. “We appreciate the constructive spirit of cooperation and openness with which they have taken place. We hope that just as in previous years we can adopt the resolution by consensus.”

Human rights organisations have been adamant that the resolution should stay in place and that the mandate of the special rapporteur continue remain unchanged, saying that both are valuable tools for monitoring the country’s human rights situation and give the international community leverage in Myanmar to ensure reforms continue.

U Aung Thaung put on US blacklist

THE United States placed influential Myanmar lawmaker and businessman U Aung Thaung on its sanctions blacklist on October 31, accusing him of blocking key reforms.

The current member of parliament and former industry minister, 73, is said to be one of the more headline members of the Union Solidarity and Development Party founded by former military strongman General Than Shwe and now led by President Thein Sein.



U Aung Thaung. Photo: Staff

The US Treasury sanctions freeze any US-based assets he might have and ban Americans from doing business with him. The Treasury’s Special Designated Nationals blacklist includes several prominent Myanmar individuals and firms in business and politics.

But the US stressed the sanctions apply to U Aung Thaung alone, and not to any government organisation with which he is associated.

“Aung Thaung is actively attempting to undermine recent economic and political reforms in Burma [Myanmar] and has been implicated in previous attacks on Burma’s democratic opposition,” the Treasury said.

U Aung Thaung is also father to U Nay Aung and U Pyi Aung, the founders of Myanmar conglomerate IGE Group, whose interests include natural resources, hotels as well as United Amara Bank, which was founded in 2010.

- AFP

Chinese firm vies for Ledo Road contract

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NORTHERN Myanmar’s legendary Ledo Road is to be upgraded, with companies from China and India presenting bids to parliament to restore an 82-kilometre (51-mile) stretch in Sagaing Region to a four-lane highway.

The American General Joseph “Vinegar Joe” Stilwell used the highway – also

known as the Stilwell Road – during World War II to ferry troops, weapons and supplies from India into Myanmar and China, although some questioned whether its military value matched the immense cost of building in such rugged terrain.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint told the hluttaw last week that the Qinchong-based Ting Man road construction company had applied jointly with Northern Royal Jade Company to develop the road as a build, operate and transfer (BOT) project. “We will scrutinise the application in detail,” the deputy minister said.

The Indian government has also surveyed the road with a view to upgrading it.

Until now, the Union and the Sagaing Region governments have been funding the widening and strengthening of the 10.2-metre (34-foot) wide road, rebuilding bridges and drains.

- Translation by Thiri Min Htun

KILOMETRES

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Portion of the Ledo Road in Sagaing Region that a Chinese company has applied to upgrade as a BOT project

YOUTH ART AWARD 2014

မြန်မာပြည်၏တိုးတက်ပြောင်းလဲမှုနှင့်အတူ အမှီးတန်ဖိုးအမွေအနှစ်များကိုထိန်းသိမ်းကြပါစို့
(အသက် ၁၄ နှစ် မှ ၂၀ နှစ်)

ပထမဆုံး	USD 800
ဒုတိယဆု	USD 500
တတိယဆု	USD 300
နှစ်သိမ်းဆု	
လူငယ်ပါရမီနှင့်ဆုတံဆိပ်	USD 100
အကောင်းဆုံးဝန်းတီးနှိုင်းမှု နှစ်သိမ်းဆု	USD 100
အကောင်းဆုံး ဆေးရောင်ခေါင်းစင်းနှိုင်းမှု နှစ်သိမ်းဆု	USD 100

၂၀ နှစ်တာလ ၂၀၁၄ ခုနှစ်ဆုတံဆိပ်များကို ခေါ်ယူပါရန်၊
အသေးစိတ်အချက်အလက်ကို မူနီ (၈၀) ၂၅၀ ၃၀၈ သို့ ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါသည်။
မြန်မာ့ဝန်ထမ်းကြီးကြားမှု ဝေးဖို့ရမည့်လိပ်စာ
PARKROYAL Yangon၊ အမှတ်(၃၃)၊ အလံပြတူရားလမ်း၊ ဘရုံမြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။



Members of a Kayin State armed group stand beside bags of rice donated to villagers in Kayin State by the Nippon Foundation in February 2013. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

ASEAN Summit delays peace meeting

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TALKS between the government and representatives of armed ethnic groups aimed at reaching a nationwide ceasefire will resume after the ASEAN Summit in November, a member of the Myanmar Peace Center said last week, but denied suggestions the delay was due to a "deadlock" in talks.

The sixth meeting between the government's Union Peace-making Work Committee (UPWC) and the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordinating Team (NCCT), which is negotiating on behalf of 16 armed ethnic groups, was held in Yangon in September.

Expectations were high heading into the talks but they hit a roadblock when negotiations turned to security sector reform. The seventh round of talks was expected to take place this month, but will now be pushed back until after the summit, which will take place on November 12 and 13 in Nay Pyi Taw.

In the meantime, a series of informal meetings between sub-groups formed at the last meeting have been held to move the process forward, he said.

"The peace talks will take place only after the ASEAN Summit because senior negotiators from the government side are busy with [the summit]," said U Min Zaw Oo, the director of the ceasefire negotiation and implementation section of the MPC.

No date has yet been set for the November meeting.

U Min Zaw Oo rejected suggestions that the delay was linked to recent fighting in the Kayin State and other areas, adding that talks were not deadlocked.

"Senior members of the governments are always busy if there is an international summit. That's the only reason why [the talks are delayed]. We are now doing preparatory works for the next meeting."

The UPWC is led by Minister for the President's Office U Aung Min and includes several other Union ministers and deputy ministers, as well as senior members of the Tatmadaw and parliamentarians.

The current version of the draft comprises seven sections and has more than 120 points. Of these, more than 100 points have been finalised by both sides.

Nationwide ceasefire signing set to unleash aid windfall

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THE signing of a nationwide ceasefire agreement is likely to prompt a major rush of aid funding into previously conflict-ravaged parts of the country, with the European Union planning to double its spending to 200 million euros (US\$254 million).

A spokesperson for the EU embassy in Yangon said it envisaged an aid package of 100 million euros (\$127 million) to be spent by 2020, on top of the 100 million euros already promised under its Peace and Conflict Resolution package. Ninety-five percent of that funding goes toward the development of ethnic regions, the EU said, with the remaining 5pc allocated to supporting the Myanmar Peace Center.

"We are exploring the possibility of funding new peace initiatives such as the envisaged joint ceasefire monitoring mechanism, the national political dialogue and aid to conflict-affected areas," said Colin Steinbach, head of the embassy's political, press and information section.

"On top of this, the EU has foreseen another package of 100 million euros for the period 2014-20. These additional funds will be allocated in the most useful and effective way as the peace process evolves."

The EU insisted that its funding to the MPC had not stopped, despite Minister for the President's Office U Aung Min telling parliament last month that much of the bloc's financial support is

on hold until a nationwide ceasefire agreement is signed.

Mr Steinbach confirmed, however, that the vast majority of the EU's peace-related aid spending will not be available until after a ceasefire is reached. He defended this as "logical" because most development projects cannot begin until security has improved.

"There is no condition, but simply a logical sequence," he said. "If weapons remain silent, work on prosperity can increase. The EU is committed to supporting a lasting peace and works in a balanced way with all parties at stake, notably ethnic groups."

"Therefore, the conclusion of a nationwide ceasefire agreement would be a major step forward and make it much easier to move to the next stage. The conclusion of an NCA would swing the door for further avenues of support wide open."

The EU refused to close how much of the MPC funding has already been spent. The EU is the largest single donor to the MPC, which has received pledges of more than \$15 million in total since 2012, including \$1.2 million from Japan and \$6.3 million from the Nippon Foundation, a Japanese NGO.

U Aung Min told MPs on October 13 that the 5 million euros from the EU was for the period November 2012 to September 2014, and 1.6 million euros (\$2 million) had been spent as of March. He also warned that international funding was in danger of drying up unless the nationwide ceasefire was signed soon.

"[Donors] have a policy that they will provide full support when we get a nationwide ceasefire accord," he said. "I don't want you getting depressed but I want let you all know the situation."

The speech generated controversy because of perceptions that he was using the funding issue to pressure armed groups into signing the ceasefire.

Following a productive round of talks in August, negotiations between the Union Peace-making Work Committee, led by U Aung Min, and the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team, which is negotiating on behalf of 16 armed ethnic groups, stalled in September when the focus shifted to

'The conclusion of a nationwide ceasefire agreement would swing the door for further avenues of support wide open.'

Colin Steinbach
EU embassy, Yangon

security-related issues. The next round of talks are expected in November.

Mr Steinbach said the EU would not "dictate timelines" and was "just there to help". "The EU has repeatedly stated that for the peace process to be successful any agreement must be inclusive and genuinely accepted by all parties," he said.

The United States embassy in Yangon said it too was ready to provide further assistance to the peace process but did not wish to "pressure" ethnic groups "to sign anything they are not

comfortable signing".

"The US supports an end to the fighting and an inclusive and transparent dialogue as the only way to the creation of a lasting peace," an official said. "The US government stands ready to provide further assistance for the peace process, including the national political dialogue."

But some question how important the agreement is for aid inflows. Ashley South, a senior adviser to the Myanmar Peace Support Initiative and research fellow at Chiangmai University, said decisions on aid programs "are made in capitals, with only limited reference to the political and security situation on the ground".

"Donors are going ahead with funding to conflict-affected areas, without much reference to the nationwide ceasefire accord," he said. "In general, aid funding in conflict-affected areas seems to follow donor and government agendas, with only limited awareness of or responsiveness to local concerns and aspirations."

"One of the main needs in the peace process will be to have sufficient - and sufficiently flexible - funding available, to support the political dialogue, if and when that commences."

However, Murray Hiebert, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said donors had been told by some ethnic groups to withhold support until more concrete steps toward a political settlement have been taken.

At the same time, he said, "many donors don't want to start providing assistance for anything but basic humanitarian needs if there's a threat of renewed fighting threatening an assistance project".

Military rejects parliament calls for factory privatisation

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THE Ministry of Defence has rejected suggestions from MPs that it privatise factories producing everything from biscuits to furniture, arguing that they help to keep government spending down and create job opportunities.

Minister for Defence Lieutenant General Wai Lwin made the comments to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on October 27 during a discussion on the military's supplementary budget request for 2014-15.

The ministry has asked for an additional K248 billion, or 10.84 percent of its initial budget of K2.366 billion approved in March. The figure is above parliament's limit for supplementary budget requests - no more than 10pc of the initial budget - but it is unclear whether it will be trimmed, as previous efforts to contain Ministry of Defence spending have been voted down by military and Union Solidarity and Development Party MPs.

Three days earlier, on October 24, MPs had proposed that the military privatise some of its factories,

which produce furniture, tea, canned goods, fish paste, biscuits, flour, textiles and plastics, the last of which is producing "international-standard bulletproof vests and helmets", Lt Gen Wai Lwin said.

He said the Tatmadaw-owned factories were not only producing food and other items for its soldiers but also supporting the development of the industrial sector, creating job opportunities and reducing military spending.

The factories have generated profits ranging from K7.5 billion in 2012-13 to K2.1 billion in 2013-14,

and were expected to make K3.9 billion this year - money that would

BILLION KYAT

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Supplementary budget request from the Ministry of Defence for 2014-15

otherwise have come from state coffers, he said.

In response to concerns that giving the military more funds would damage the peace process, Lt Gen Wai Lwin said only about one-third of the ministry's budget went toward military operations. The remainder, he said, was for salaries, management, infrastructure, education and healthcare.

The military's budget has risen each year under the new government but fallen as a percentage of budget spending.

- Translation by Thiri Min Htun



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Parents of Koh Tao accused allowed to visit

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THE parents of two migrants accused of killing a British couple on the Thai island of Koh Tao have had the chance to visit the pair in detention.

The parents said the two men, Ko Zaw Lin and Ko Win Zaw Htun, told them they had been tortured into confessing to killing Hannah Witheridge and David Miller, whose bodies were found on a beach on September 15.

The men, who were arrested on October 1, are in custody on the island of Koh Samui but have not yet been formally charged. Under Thai law, they could be held for up to 84 days without trial, after which they must be released if no charges are laid. If convicted, both men could face the death penalty.

"They said they never committed the crime. They told their parents in front of Thai lawyers that they were tortured and forced to admit to the killing. On October 24, a letter of objection ... was sent to the court in Koh Samui. The Attorney General's Office has accepted the letter of objection," said migrant rights activist Ko Htoo Chit, who is assisting the pair.

The two men have already signed a formal statement claiming they were not at the scene of the crime and only confessed after being tortured by Thai police.

While Thai police have rejected the accusations and insist the case against the men is solid, the Lawyer's Council of Thailand has formed a team of 16 lawyers to investigate the allegations. Myanmar's ambassador to Thailand, U Win Maung, was expected to meet with the council on October 29.

The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission has also asked Thailand's National Human Rights Commission to ensure that the two migrant workers receive a fair trial, and it has said it will investigate the claims of torture.



Monks attend a ceremony in Yangon. Photo: Kaung Htet

Sangha committee orders crackdown on fake monks



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SENIOR clergy have launched a crackdown on mendicants who masquerade as monks to solicit money and food from passers-by, as well as abbots who send novices across the city to collect alms in popular tourist areas.

In one recent case, a shaven-headed man was seen to enter a public lavatory, emerging a few moments later in clerical garb. Police in Obo ward, Kyeemyindaing township, arrested the man and charged him under sections 295 and 295(a) of the penal code, which both relate to insulting religion and carry a possible jail term

of two years.

The last crackdown occurred in 2009, when a gang of 20 shaven-headed men was found sleeping rough under clerical robes in Yangon's Shwe Pyi Thar township.

Now the Buddhist authorities have issued an instruction to Sangha officials in each Yangon township to look out for imposters, the deputy head of Yangon Region's Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, U Gunarlinkarra, told *The Myanmar Times*.

Similar instructions were first issued under the U Ne Win regime to prohibit Buddhist monks from entering teashops and cinemas or watching football. "But now we need stronger action. Fraudsters pretending to be Buddhist monks are increasing in number, and bringing our religion into disrepute," said U Gunarlinkarra.

The clean-up will be concentrated in the downtown townships

of Pabedan, Latha, Lanmadaw and Kyauktada.

Urging the public to cooperate, U Gunarlinkarra said, "People who suspect an imposter should inform the township police, or the administrator if necessary."

But the campaign is likely to run up against the reluctance of members of the public to report possible bogus

monks, and police to investigate the allegations.

"It's hard for a layperson to tell whether a monk is genuine or not," said Ko Naing, who lives in 50th Street, Botahtaung township. "But ... we want effective action taken against them."

Buddhist authorities have also had to take action when they found that some out-of-town abbots had sent their novices to circulate in downtown Yangon, apparently because the pickings are richer there. The Sasana committee took up the matter with the local township authorities.

"We saw a group of five novices in front of Traders Hotel. The abbot of their monastery in Thaketa sent them, and took the money they collected," said U Gunarlinkarra. "Now people who are not even monks are begging for money in clerical garb. We have to crack down on this fraud."

'It's hard for a layperson to tell whether a monk is genuine or not.'

Ko Naing
Botahtaung resident

New campaign forces buses into right lane

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BUS drivers are being warned to stick to right-hand lanes and not stop except in designated places as part of the latest traffic police campaign to improve safety and ease traffic congestion.

The program was launched on October 23 and Police Lieutenant Colonel Linn Htut said police were using loudspeakers to remind drivers to stay within the lanes, which have been painted with thick yellow lines to distinguish them from others on the road.

"We are using automatic speakers at 20 traffic lights [to remind them]. We hope to use this system in both municipal and other areas where there is traffic congestion," U Linn Htut said last week, referring to the 33 townships that are managed by Yangon City Development Committee.

He said police have taken action against 86 bus drivers for violating the rules since October 24, and fined each of them the princely sum of K1500 - the maximum allowed under current laws, which date to the 1960s.

The broadcasts, which are being played in 10 downtown and inner suburban townships, also remind the public to only board a bus at a bus stop and cross the road at designated spots.

U Hla Aung, head of the Yangon Region Supervisory Committee for Motor Vehicles, better known by its Myanmar-language acronym of Ma Hta Tha, said the project aimed to both improve safety and reduce traffic congestion.

"At the moment buses stop everywhere and they bully other cars on the road," he said.

"If we use this system, the buses will go only within the yellow lines - they can't bully others and can't race against each other."

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Seafarer division struggles to act on sailor complaints



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THE Department of Marine Administration's Seafarer Division is receiving an average of three complaints a month so far this year from sailors stranded in foreign countries after paying a service fee to a job agency to place them on board a ship, a senior official said.

However, in many cases it cannot take action against the agencies, either because the complainant lacks strong evidence or the agency is not registered with the division, said U Toe Myint, director of the Seafarer Division.

In just three of more than 30 cases submitted this year has the division been able to secure compensation for the complainant, he said.

"Often they could not substantiate their accusation. We need sound recordings if we are to settle their cases. If they have strong evidence ... our division will ensure they get

back the money they were cheated out of," U Toe Myint said.

He said that the division could only extract compensation from registered agencies.

"If they are registered we can revoke the licence of an agency that cheats seafarers," he said. "If we find that the company that cheated them is not registered all we can do is send a complaint letter to Bureau of Special Investigation and the Anti-Human Trafficking Division."

The division has also revoked the licences of three companies this year. Parita Shipping and World Grade Marine had their licences cancelled in February and March respectively after BSI, a financial crime-fighting force in the Ministry of Home Affairs, investigated allegations they had made fake documents for seafarers, including the identity document known as the Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC). They had also been accused of cheating sailors.

DMA cancelled their licences after BSI initiated legal proceedings against the companies' owners.

In May, meanwhile, the DMA

revoked the licence of Glory Marine after an investigation found it had cheated prospective sailors by providing fake air tickets, CDCs and other documents.

As *The Myanmar Times* reported last week, hundreds of prospective sailors are stranded at Sibu Port in Malaysia waiting for a berth on a vessel after paying job agencies thousands of dollars to place them on board a ship. Most have to work as labourers in the meantime, while some are forced to work on fishing rather than cargo vessels. Many

'Often they could not substantiate their accusation. We need sound recordings if we are to settle their cases.'

U Toe Myint
Seafarer Division director

cannot afford to return home even if they wanted to.

U Toe Myint acknowledged that many were being cheated but said there was little the division could do to help those who used an unregistered agency.

He said many of these unregistered firms also charged an agency fee, in contravention of section 26(a) of the Myanmar Merchant Shipping Act.

"Since those companies have received a service charge from ship owners [for placing sailors on the ships], they shouldn't charge a service fee to the sailors," he said.

U Toe Myint said the division will publish the names of registered companies each month in an effort to help people identify which companies are reputable.

While there have been as many as 280 registered shipping agencies in the past, as of April the division had registered 120. This figure has since risen to 153, he said.

Myanmar has more than 98,000 registered seamen, of whom only around 30,000 are on board a ship at any one time.

— Translation by Thiri Min Htun

Seven men jailed for Taungkok murders

THANDWE District Court last week jailed seven men for lynching 10 Muslim bus passengers, in an attack that sparked mass unrest between Buddhists and Muslims in the western state of Rakhine two years ago.

The men were each given seven years by the court for the murders, which saw the passengers dragged from the vehicle and killed by a mob, an official from the town's administrative office said.

"I do not know whether they were Buddhists or not but they are the ones who committed the crime," he said, asking not to be named.

The official said all the convicted men were residents of Taungkok, where ethnic Rakhines – who are mostly Buddhist – attacked the bus on June 3, 2012.

The apparent trigger for the attack was the rape and murder of a Rakhine girl a few days earlier in Thandwe district, allegedly by Muslims.

Violence between Buddhists and minority Rohingya Muslims spread quickly across Rakhine, as long-held resentments in the impoverished region exploded into two major bouts of bloodshed.

More than 200 people were killed and 140,000 left homeless as armed mobs torched villages. – AFP

IN BRIEF

Kachin party to contest all seats

A Kachin political party formed by former Kachin Independence Organisation deputy leader Manam Tu Jar plans to contest seats in all 18 Kachin State townships in next year's election.

Manam Tu Jar said the Kachin State Democracy Party would prioritise women candidates, as well as younger representatives.

"We will give priority to youth and we also want women involved in political affairs," he said.

He said the Kachin State Democracy Party had hoped to merge or form alliances with other ethnic Kachin parties but this was now unlikely to happen before the election, which is expected in October or November 2015.

Established on October 30, 2013, the party also opposes changing the electoral system from first-past-the-post to proportional representation.

Manam Tu Jar had tried to form a party to contest the 2010 election but was blocked from doing so by the Union Election Commission because of his links to the KIO. He registered as an independent for the 2012 by-elections but voting was cancelled in his Kachin State constituency.

— Hlaing Kyaw Soe,

translation by Thiri Min Htun

Applications open for Chevening Scholarship

Applications are now open for this year's Chevening Scholarship, which will fund one student's master's degree at a British university, including the visa, tuition fees, a return flight and monthly allowances.

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He or she will also "hold a degree of an equivalent standard to at least a good UK second-class honours degree and have at least two years work or equivalent experience."

There is no age limit but the student is expected to return to Myanmar after completing the degree.

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Seven years after Saffron, an

A key figure in the protests that engulfed Myanmar in September 2007, Gambira spent four years and two months behind bars – and was brutally tortured by his captors – before being released from prison in a January 2012 amnesty. Having once taken on the military regime, Gambira is now engaged in a new battle: overcoming post-traumatic stress disorder that stems from his time in prison, writes **Kayleigh Long**

It was the meditation that Gambira learned as a young monk that helped him to survive prison, with its beatings, boredom and awful food. It helped him to be free – “free from fear, free from anger, free from grief”, he says – despite the bare walls and iron bars.

These days, he meditates just once a day, before bed. It helps him sleep.

While the rest of us take it for granted, sleep does not come easy for Gambira, who shot to prominence as one of the leaders of the 2007 protests. When it does finally arrive, his dreams are filled with recurrent nightmares.

“I have dreams – it is like physical torture. They’re not really beating [me] now, but it is not far away,” he told *The Myanmar Times* during a recent interview in Chiang Mai.

A pair of jeans and a plain T-shirt – sometimes matched with black-rimmed glasses and a leather jacket – have replaced the monk’s robes that the 35-year-old wore for most of his adult life.

Some outward signs of his time in the Sangha remain. When speaking Burmese, he has a deep, rhythmic voice – a cadence that likely developed from years of chanting. One of the hardest aspects of transitioning to lay life, he says, was adjusting to the informal tone of conversation.

Like many monks, Gambira had a formidable memory. This helped him greatly when he went underground before the uprising, as it was too dangerous for plans to be written down.

He can still recall much about the four years and two months he spent behind bars – normally solitary confinement – in prisons in Yangon, Sagaing, Ayeyarwady and Mandalay regions. But since walking free in January 2012, Gambira has struggled to remember basic things, such as taking the minimum-dose mood stabilisers he has been prescribed, or the antihistamines for his sinus problems.

A physician who treated him upon his release said he showed signs of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) from the severe beatings inflicted by guards. When he first got out, his speech had been affected and he was prone to slurring.

Life after prison was tough. Never out of the spotlight for long, Gambira made a short-lived return to the Sangha, and an even shorter marriage. He was rearrested several times and eventually moved to Thailand, where he sought treatment for post-traumatic

The Cabin’s treatment programs would normally be outside Gambira’s means, but he has been taken on for free as part of the centre’s CSR program.

His treatment at The Cabin is a regular schedule of yoga, mindfulness meditation and eye movement directional reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, overseen by his therapist, Rory Magee.

EMDR was developed by accident in the late 1980s by Dr Francine Shapiro who, while taking a walk one day, found that moving her eyes from side to side reduced the severity of troubling memories. She conducted tests and developed a clinical method that involved having a patient make repetitive eye movements from one side to the other, often following the therapist’s pen or finger, while conjuring up the thoughts or memories they found most troubling.

While initially dismissed as fringe science in the 1990s, studies have since shown eye movements appear to play some role in processing traumatic memories – though exactly how this works is a matter of some conjecture.

The therapist asks the patient to remember a scenario or event in as much detail as possible: sights, sounds, smells, sensations, emotions. It’s shown to have a high success rate, and as a rule of thumb halves the amount of therapy time required.

That Gambira is in need of treatment is clear. When he arrived at The Cabin, Gambira was to be an in-patient but became so distressed when staff took away his medication – standard practice in an addiction treatment facility – that he insisted on leaving. The fact that he would be unable to leave the facility and would have to surrender basic freedoms such as regulating his own medication intake seemed to trigger something. The Cabin agreed to take him on as their first outpatient, provided he kept up his appointments.

Sitting on a couch in the sunny group therapy room at The Cabin, Dr

Four years, two months, five prisons

- **November 4:** Arrest and interrogation at army camp for 11 days
- **Insein Prison:** November 13, 2007–December 10, 2008
- **Oboe Prison:** December 11, 2008–January 3, 2009
- **Khamti Prison:** January 4, 2009–May 12, 2009
- **Kalay Prison:** May 13, 2009–November 16, 2011
- **Myaungmya Prison:** November 18, 2011–January 13, 2012

stress disorder (PTSD).

Some of the scars he bears from prison, like those around his wrists from being forced to wear steel handcuffs for three months, will not fade. With treatment, though, there is hope that his poor memory, insomnia, headaches and recurrent nightmares – all textbook PTSD symptoms – can be alleviated, if not cured.

Life at The Cabin

In mid-2014, Gambira became an outpatient at The Cabin, a high-end rehabilitation facility on the outskirts of Chiang Mai. At US\$13,000 a month,



Gambira (right) talks with therapist Dr Rory Magee at The Cabin in Chiang Mai, northern Thailand.

Magee explains that trauma can generally be divided into two categories: “little t” and “big t”.

The former includes upsetting experiences, such as a bad breakup, a humiliation, a failure and getting fired: events that can have a major and enduring impact on a person’s mental state.

“Big t” trauma, meanwhile, completely overwhelms a person, and is characterised by an acute sense of helplessness and founded, abiding fear of death. It often presents in witnesses or victims of violence, natural disasters, rape, war. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder gained widespread recognition after the Vietnam War, with the “you weren’t there, man” phenomenon of shell-shocked veterans rising to prominence and giving way to a broader dialogue. PTSD gained became officially recognised in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, published by the American Psychiatric Association, in

the 1980s.

Gambira’s is trauma with a big, big “t”. This sort is not consigned to the semantic memory – that is, the “this is something that happened at x point in time”, factual-recall part of the brain. Those with PTSD exist on the brink, in a near-permanent state of heightened anticipation.

Sensory triggers can bring trauma crashing back into the present, with overwhelming feelings of hopelessness and fear. There are also physical effects: sudden rushes of adrenaline, an elevated pulse, affected breath. Dr Magee gives the example of a former patient who’d seen action during his time in the armed forces and who, when a car backfired, was suddenly nowhere to be seen. As far as this man’s mind and body were concerned, he was still in a war zone.

To tackle Gambira’s most serious traumas, Dr Magee asks him to imagine the worst period at each of the five prisons he did time in, while guiding him through eye movements. Overall, Gambira says, he has found that starting EMDR has reduced the incidence and severity of nightmares, his moods have stabilised, his headaches have all but gone away, and he is less easily triggered. He still has an extraordinary amount of trauma to contend with, but he’s working through it.

“I think I am getting better,” Gambira says. “About 80 percent; 20pc remains. I [still] get really sad; I need to take a rest. The doctors tell me to take a rest for a year – at least.”

Before the revolution

Gambira was born in June 1979 as Mg Nyi Nyi Lwin, a name he tattooed crudely on the back of his hand as a child. His father was a publisher and a key organiser of anti-government protests in Meiktila in 1988; young Mg Nyi Nyi Lwin would help his mother give food to protesters at sit-ins.

Despite his later pro-democracy activities, he laughingly describes himself as a “black sheep” of the family. He ran away from home at 12 to join the Tatmadaw but quickly grew to dislike the system of discipline that saw the entire unit punished for one member’s misbehaviour. Occasionally there were beatings. He lasted just four months before deserting, and entered the Sangha.

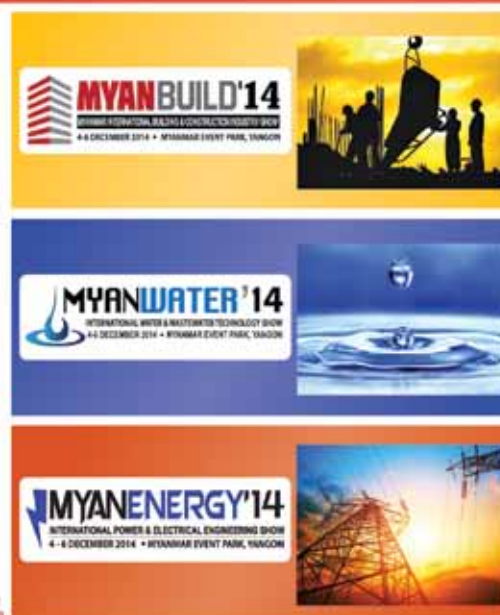
The 2007 protests, quickly dubbed

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activist's struggle continues



Thailand. Photo: Supplied

the Saffron Revolution, were a long time coming. An underground networks of activists had been quietly working for years to lay the groundwork for an uprising in the style of 1988; Gambira was involved in coordinating between the Sangha and laypeople in Yangon and Mandalay.

They were presented with an opportunity when the government dramatically increased fuel prices in August 2007 – a move that exacerbated dissatisfaction with living conditions under the military.

Tensions rose further when the authorities broke up a peaceful protest in Pakokku, Magwe Region, and injured several monks. In response, the All Burma Monks Association (ABMA) was formed on September 9 by merging four smaller monastic groups. The

‘I have dreams – it’s like physical torture. They’re not really beating [me] now, but it is not far away.’

Gambira
Activist

ABMA set a September 17 deadline for an apology from the police. When this was not met, the following day monks began what is known as *patta nikkuj-jana kamma*, or the upending of the alms – a refusal to accept donations from military families, thus denying them merit.

This tactic, the gravest moral weapon in the Sangha’s arsenal, had been deployed on just a handful of occasions in recent history: against the British, against the communists, and once when three monks were killed while protesting the imprisonment of five of their counterparts for inciting violence against Muslims near Mandalay.

The monks continued with their peaceful protests, demonstrations that were broadcast around the globe. The world then watched as the military launched a brutal crackdown, imprisoning many of the movement’s organisers. Gambira went into hiding.

On November 4, 2007, the *Washington Post* ran an editorial Gambira had penned by the light of a fire while lying low in the jungle. He says this was taken to the border by a runner, who he thinks read it down a phone line to someone who forwarded it to newspaper for publication.

“Burma’s Saffron Revolution is just beginning,” he wrote. “The regime’s use of mass arrests, murder, torture and imprisonment has failed to extinguish our desire for the freedom that was stolen from us so many years ago. We have taken their best punch. Now it is the generals who must fear the consequences of their actions. We adhere to nonviolence, but our spine is made of steel. There is no turning back. It matters little if my life or the lives of colleagues should be sacrificed on this journey. Others will fill our sandals, and more will join and follow.”

The day the article went to print, Gambira was lying low with his father and two colleagues in a town between Mandalay and Meiktila. They were surrounded by police and military officials in cars and on motorbikes. He, his father and colleagues were taken to separate locations. The next 11 days were marked by light and sleep deprivation, as well as severe beatings and intense interrogation.

On November 20, 2008, Gambira received a 68-years sentence for a litany of offences under the Penal Code. Exactly what each of these charges were, though, he still cannot recall.

After 11 days at the interrogation facility – an army camp somewhere near Mandalay – he was sent to Insein Prison. He then did stints at Oboe Prison in Mandalay, Hkamti and

Kalay prisons in Sagaing Region and finally Myaungmya Prison in Ayeyarwady Region.

‘Never surrender, never give up’

Gambira counts Khamti Prison, on the upper reaches of the Chindwin River in remote Sagaing Region, as the worst.

Here he carved a sentence on the wall of his 8-by-10-foot cell for the next prisoner to read. It had to be relatively short because of the difficulty scratching letters into concrete. He went with, “Life has not any formula. Never surrender, never give up.”

When he had the use of his hands, he would also etch days on the wall to mark the passing of time.

“In prison a second is really long. Now we can talk about a month, a year ... One second in prison is a very long time. But you feel your blood and you know you’re alive,” Gambira said.

While he might suffer lapses in memory today due to his PTSD, Gambira is remarkably sharp on the details of his time in prison, rattling off dates with ease.

His incarceration was marked by a long list of abuses, including solitary confinement, light and sleep deprivation, round-the-clock music torture, and extended periods in *poun-zans*, or stress positions. He was subjected to severe beatings that would inflict serious head injuries and leave him unconscious.

For a three-month stretch in Kalay, his hands were bound behind his back with steel handcuffs and his feet were also shackled. He was fed and washed by other prisoners who were common criminals.

Then there was the healthcare, or lack thereof. A 2005 report by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) on conditions in Myanmar’s prisons described the level of care as so bad that it may constitute “torture and not



just ill treatment”. For Gambira, this meant a case of malaria that went untreated and, according to his doctors, may have been cerebral – a potentially life-threatening form of the disease.

During the four years and two months he was detained, the only book he managed to lay his hands on was a copy of the Bible, where one paragraph in English would be followed by its Burmese translation. Luke 6:31 became one of his favourite verses: “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

The food was particularly grim. Prisoners had a joke about the rice, which contained a lot of sand. This would wear down the teeth if they tried to chew it. As such, they were faced with a choice: to waste time picking out individual grains – a process they called *ywe kauk pwe*, or election (a play on words, as *ywe kye pwe* means “selection”) – or to just swallow it.

The prison guards sometimes seemed reluctant to carry out abuses because of his former status as a monk. Occasionally they would quietly say, “Sorry, saya,” and explain they were acting on orders.

Even in prison, Gambira caused something of a headache for the authorities. He undertook three hunger strikes: for five days, four days and – the longest – 11 days. These, he said, were in response to the appalling conditions prisoners are forced to endure, including the near-total lack of healthcare, abysmal food and deliberate restrictions placed on communication with their families by virtue of being placed in far-flung facilities.

Many former political prisoners have suffered ill-health as a result of the conditions they endured inside. Hypertension and gastric issues brought about by a poor diet, respiratory problems, malaria and heart conditions are all common.

Less is said about mental health illnesses, perhaps in part because services in Myanmar fall desperately short of what is needed. There’s also stigma attached to those who suffer psychological problems. This is something Gambira says is important to get out into the open.

Some help has been made available for former political prisoners through the US Endowment for Democracy, with funding channelled through the AAPP. Its in-country program for treating victims of torture began in 2013 and now has 24 counsellors treating more than 300 people in Yangon and Mandalay. It remains unclear why or how Gambira slipped through the cracks.

Life after prison

Gambira didn’t believe the prison commander who informed him he was to be released. It was something he’d been told many times before as a cruel joke. The commander had to say the words about half a dozen times before they began to sink in. At 6pm on January 13, 2012, the gates opened and he walked out of Maungmya Prison in the blue fatigues of an inmate – now, at least theoretically, a free man.

He quickly returned the Sangha, donning the robes that he’d been stripped of upon arrest. He also returned to political activism, visiting IDP camps on the China border in February 2012. Upon returning to Yangon from Kachin State, he was questioned by the authorities.

In November 2012, Gambira was trotted out as a guest of honour at Yangon University when President Obama delivered an address during his visit. Afterward, they shook hands.

Two weeks later, Gambira was detained again by the authorities, this time on break-and-enter charges. He

dismisses these casually: Yes, they closed some of the monasteries, so I broke in. He was arrested and detained five times after his release from prison, but only three of these were ever reported in the media, he says.

Life in Myanmar had become untenable. Former colleagues had fled; others shut him out under pressure from the authorities. People would be questioned after he visited them, and he had trouble finding a doctor who would agree to see him.

Struggling to deal with his PTSD and still very much on the authorities’ radar, Gambira voluntarily left the Sangha in mid-2013. This was followed by a brief marriage to an Australian citizen, with whom he remains friends.

It had become clear he needed help. In mid-2013 Gambira caught a bus to the Thai border and then continued on to Chiang Mai, where he’s been focusing full-time on his recovery.

This has included surgery on his sinuses to remove two pre-cancerous growths, which are thought to have been exacerbating his headaches.

He busies himself with sessions at The Cabin. He has enrolled in an English course and closely follows news from Myanmar. He is even teaching himself to play the guitar. He writes music that he describes as “interfaith blues”.

Religious conflict is an issue that regularly peppers his conversations. Gambira talks about Islamophobia as though it’s a disease – one he admits infected him as a monk in his early 20s, but from which he managed to recover.

“My father explained about Islamophobia. He said, ‘My son, your mindset is wrong. You are a monk. You should not think like this. It is against the teachings of Buddha.’ He compared between Buddhism and Islam, and Christianity and Hinduism and Shintoism and Taoism, Confucianism, existentialism ... We are all human beings. Myanmar people need to change their mindset.”

Not everybody appreciates this sentiment. Gambira has received a large number of abusive and threatening emails since his release from prison for statements he has made on controversial topics, such as the treatment of the Rohingya in Rakhine State and the spread of anti-Muslim sentiment.

Initially, he would write back and say, “You need to change your mindset. This [hatred] is not the Buddhist way.” Now he just ignores them.

He hopes to return to Myanmar and wants to be a monk again. He also wants to go to his favourite pagoda – Shwezigone in Bagan. Asked if he thinks this will be possible, he pauses for a moment before responding, “Maybe, in six years.”

During Gambira’s darkest days in prison, he often contemplated suicide. It seemed appealing: the easy option in the face of such terrible and hopeless conditions. Indeed, many succumbed.

Some lines of poetry, which he first read in his early 20s, would run through his mind. “The woods are lovely, dark and deep,” he says, reciting a line from Robert Frost’s “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening”.

These words would remind him not of how much he had been through in his short life, but how much was still left to do.

“What Robert Frost means is, the forest – it is death. He means it is very attractive, easy. We don’t need to be suffering; he means that when we die there is no pain. But he cannot go into the forest because he has more to do. He has ‘promises to keep’”.

They are lines that still sustain him through his self-imposed exile in Thailand, his recovery at The Cabin and the ostracism for his views on religious conflict.

“In prison I would think about [the woods] often,” he says. “I know I have ‘miles to go before I sleep.’”

Citizenship pilot postponed in Myebon

No more applications will be accepted in Myebon until verification program is rolled out across the country, regional government says



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A PILOT project to assess the citizenship credentials of IDPs in Myebon township has been suspended, sources said last week, following complaints that the program had enabled "Bengalis" to gain citizenship by saying they are ethnic Kaman.

Sittwe residents said Rakhine State Chief Minister U Maung Maung Ohn informed them of the suspension during a recent meeting with township leaders and monks on October 24.

"[U Maung Maung Ohn] said the

government needs to take more time to scrutinise those who have sent in applications [for citizenship] in order to ensure citizenship is granted according to the law," said Sittwe resident U Than Htun, who attended the meeting. Radio Free Asia reported that U Maung Maung Ohn told members of the regional

'People who have not yet applied can do so when the program restarts.'

U Hla Thein

Rakhine State government

government the same day that no more pilot projects would be implemented. Instead, the citizenship verification program would be rolled out nationally by the Union government's Ministry of Immigration and Population.

U Hla Thein, head of the Rakhine State government's information team, confirmed last week that the pilot project had been "postponed," but said it had not stopped completely.

He declined to reveal why it had been suspended but said a central committee for citizenship scrutiny would continue to examine applications already submitted in Myebon but was not accepting any more for the time being.

"The central committee is working on those applications that are in line with the law ... People who have not yet applied can do so when the program re-

starts," U Hla Thein said.

"The government also planned to expand the project to Ramree and Kyaukpadaung before a national rollout but we cannot say exactly when that will happen."

To initiate the pilot, the government formed the central committee with Union ministers from the ministries of border affairs, the President's Office, and immigration and population, and began accepting applications in Myebon, which was chosen because Muslim IDPs were considered more cooperative than in other areas.

On September 22, the Rakhine State government granted citizenship to 40 people and naturalised citizenship to 169, after receiving 1094 applications. Most applicants were ethnic Kaman, while some applied as "Bengalis". The government refused to accept

applications in which the stated ethnicity was Rohingya.

However, the citizenship ceremony prompted complaints from Buddhist residents, who said some "Bengalis" were registering as Kaman, which is one of Myanmar's 135 official ethnic groups.

On October 19, residents in Sittwe issued a statement calling on the regional government to review the issuing of citizenship cards following a two-day workshop in the state capital focused on the 1982 Citizenship Law.

"We are not opposed to the government's decision to grant citizenship but we oppose Bengalis using the name Kaman," said U Aung Win, a MP in the Rakhine State Hluttaw. "We asked the regional government to confirm that the details of those who have been granted citizenship are correct."



A police officer oversees the destruction of narcotics at a ceremony in Yangon on June 25. Photo: Zarni Phyo

CRIME IN BRIEF

Husband cuts estranged wife

A husband who slashed his estranged wife's cheek while he was driving her to a meeting with their son in Yangon's Thaketa township has been charged with voluntarily causing hurt with a weapon and could face up to 10 years in prison.

The woman was taken to Yangon General Hospital at about 5:30pm on October 21 for treatment, police said. The couple had been separated for six months.

Lone protester charged with unlawful assembly

A lone protester who walked through Yankin, North Okkalapa and Mingalardon townships on October 20 holding a sign demanding that political prisoners be released and the peaceful protest law be amended has been charged.

Police in all three townships said they charged Ko Nay Lin Soe, 23, under section 18 of the peaceful protest law for holding a protest without permission. Each charge carries a potential one-year jail term.

Drinker dies after fall

A woman with a long history of alcohol abuse died in bed on October 22, hours after she reportedly fell down at home after drinking for five days without eating, police in South Dagon township said.

The woman's husband had put her in bed after the fall but she died early the next morning. Police said her body displayed eye wounds and swelling and are still investigating the circumstances surrounding her death.

Robbers target convenience store in early morning raid

Police are looking for three men in their 30s who robbed a 24-hour convenience store on Lower Mingalardon Street in Insein township at about 3am on October 24.

The thieves pulled a knife on owner U Myo Thwin before taping his eyes and mouth, and tying his hands behind his back. They then made off with SIM cards, a TV and alcohol, as well as K400,000 taken out of the register.

Boy dies after mistakenly drinking insecticide

A 15-year-old died on October 24 after accidentally drinking insecticide that had been stored in a water bottle.

The boy from Gone Nyin Dan village in Oakkan township drank the insecticide at about 9am after working outside. He was later sent to hospital but died the same afternoon. - *Toe Wai Aung, translation by Khant Lin Oo and Thiri Min Htun*

Drug dealers descend on Mingalar Taung Nyunt

Inner city township is Yangon's drug centre, police say, and has topped the list for seizures and arrests three years running

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DRUG dealers from across the country are increasingly setting up shop in Mingalar Taung Nyunt township, police say, taking advantage of its large and ethnically diverse population, access to wholesale markets and thriving nightlife to peddle illicit substances.

Since January 1, 2012, police have made 85 drug busts in the township - and the problem appears to be growing. In the first nine months of this year, 27 drug seizures were made, compared to 30 during 2013 and 28 the previous year.

While no figures were given for the size of the seizures, more than 500,000 amphetamine tablets were seized in one raid in 2013, while more than 1 million tablets were seized in two incidents this year.

Tarmwe, Thaketa and South Dagon had the next highest number of cases over the past three years, police said, with amphetamines and marijuana the

most common illicit substances.

In 2012 the second-highest seizures were recorded in Tarmwe, while in 2013 Thaketa was in second place, said Police Lieutenant Colonel Myint Htwe, the head for Yangon's east district.

BILLION KYAT

11

Value of drugs seized in Yangon in the first nine months of 2014, more than double the amount captured last year

"But Mingalar Taung Nyunt township is a focal point for drug traffickers and dealers because it has people of different races and religions and it has

lots of markets and other infrastructure," he said.

The township is home to both Mingalar Market and Yuzana Plaza, as well as a range of beer stations, night clubs and karaoke lounges.

Police Deputy Superintendent Thann Oo, who is based in Mingalar Taung Nyunt, said drug traffickers come from other townships in Yangon - or even other parts of the country - and set up networks of dealers there.

"We even found some who come from Myitkyina, Lashio, Hpa-an and Muse," he said. "The problem is getting worse, as we can see from the growing number of seizures."

Residents told *The Myanmar Times* last week they also perceived drugs to be a growing problem.

"It is not good for our township. Drugs are increasing because wholesalers are using Mingalar Taung Nyunt as their base. Young people are facing drug problems as a result," said Ko Aung Ko Myint, a resident of Independence ward.

The number of cases and amount of drugs seized across Yangon is also rising again, police said, after a drop in 2013.

In 2012, police seized drugs valued at K10.755 billion from 326 cases but this fell to K5.428 billion and 286 cases the following year.

In the first nine months of this year, drugs valued at K10.966 billion were seized in 324 cases, according to police figures.

Police said they believed the higher number of seizures this year was due in part to the creation of extra anti-drug units in August 2013. Previously, there were only drug taskforces in east and west districts, but new groups were created in north and south district, as well as forces to monitor ports and airports for illicit drugs.

"Due to the expansion of the anti-drug force we can capture more drugs than before," said anti-drug task force member Police Lieutenant Colonel Myint Aung.

Media law will force ministries to respond to information requests

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DRAFT by-laws for the News Media Law will require government ministries to reply to media enquiries within 24 hours and take action against staff who do not respond in time, a senior Myanmar Press Council (Interim) official says.

The measures are designed to improve access to information for journalists, who regularly complain that government officials are reluctant to release data or provide comment for articles.

Press council member U Thiha Saw said he was confident the provisions in the by-law would result in positive change. He said the government was supportive, citing Minister for Information U Ye Htut's recent promise to work with other ministries to improve their information dissemination systems.

The Ministry of Information has provided media training to 500 government officials to prepare for the introduction of the News Media Law, while each department in every ministry will have an assigned spokesperson.

"Ministries are already preparing [to reply to enquiries within 24 hours]," said U Thiha Saw, who is also editorial director at *The Myanmar Times*. "It is likely that journalists will gain improved access to information in coming years. Journalists' right to get information is the same as the public's right to know, so it is a very important provision."

He said the press council had initially argued that enquiries should receive a response within 12 hours, but this was doubled after negotiations with the Ministry of Information.

The by-laws, which were drafted by the press council, are with the Attorney General's Office and should be enacted within two months, he added.

"It could be as soon as two weeks or at the most two months for the by-laws to be signed by the president."

'Journalists' right to get information is the same as the public's right to know, so it is a very important provision.'

U Thiha Saw
Myanmar Press Council (Interim)

The law will also require ministries to discipline staff who fail to respond to media enquiries properly or within 24 hours. This also appears to have government support, with U Ye Htut telling reporters on October 21 following a one-hour meeting with the Myanmar Journalists Network that they could inform the ministry through the press council or journalists' network if they have trouble getting information from ministries.

U Thiha Saw said that while there might be limits on releasing some sensitive information the majority of requests should receive a response.

"For example, if the Ministry of Construction was asked about how many bridges were being built and how much it had spent and the ministry declined to answer then action should be taken against the ministry."



Minister for Information U Ye Htut speaks at a press conference at the Myanmar Journalists' Network on October 21. Photo: Yu Yu

"This kind of enquiry concerns every member of the public and [the information] is neither a state secret nor [dangerous for] state security. The public have a right to know

what the ministries are doing with public money and the media must have the right to ask questions so that the public can know."

- Translation by Zar Zar Soe

Court rejects first 'Bi Mon Te Nay' appeal

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AN appeal from five jailed staffers of defunct weekly journal *Bi Mon Te Nay* has been rejected by Yangon's West District Court, their lawyer said last week.

U Kyaw Win told *The Myanmar Times* that the appeal against the two-year sentences handed down earlier this month was rejected on October 27.

"Our appeal was read out along with the text of the verdict and the court refused to accept [the appeal]," he said, adding that no reason was given for rejecting the appeal.

Two publishers and three editorial staff from *Bi Mon Te Nay* were arrested in July for publishing a factually incorrect statement from a political activist group, the Movement for Democracy Current Force (MDCF), that claimed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and ethnic political leaders had formed an interim government.

They were arrested under the Emergency Provisions Act and later charged with incitement under the Penal Code. On October 10 they were sentenced to two years' imprisonment.

Relatives of the jailed journalists are considering whether to appeal to the Yangon Region High Court. They have 60 days to make a decision.

"There are higher courts for us, the Yangon Region High Court and Supreme Court. We are discussing whether to submit an appeal. The families will decide," U Kyaw Win said.

On October 21, Minister for Information U Ye Htut promised to raise the case with the president, who has the power to free them in an amnesty, but also said that the government could not get involved until the legal process has concluded.

As the prospects for an amnesty appear good, submitting an appeal - even if it is eventually successful - could result in the men serving longer than if they did not appeal.



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Dated: 3 November 2014

Rare red pandas caught on film in Kachin State

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NEW footage of rare and endangered red pandas taken in Kachin State has highlighted the threat to their survival posed by hunting and the wildlife trade, as well as the devastating impact illegal logging and deforestation has had on their habitats.

The red panda (*Ailurus fulgens*) is listed as “vulnerable” on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List, with fewer than 10,000 mature individuals estimated to survive in the wild.

However, a relatively large population lives in the high-altitude bamboo and conifer forests of the Imawbum mountain range, in Myanmar's far northeast.

The footage of the red pandas, the first caught on film in Myanmar, was captured by conservation group Flora and Fauna International (FFI). It shows a pair crawling slowly on a rocky landslide caused by Chinese logging up to a degraded forest to feed on bamboo leaves.

“When we encountered the two red pandas, we felt two emotions at the same time: incredibly happy for the direct sighting and for obtaining this first exciting footage, but terribly saddened seeing the state of their habitat and threats to the species’ survival,” said Saw Soe Aung, an FFI field biologist who captured the pandas on film.



Two rare red pandas climb over rocks in Kachin State. Photo: Supplied/FFI

Chinese logging companies are not only destroying the delicate alpine forest but are also creating access roads that enable hunting and a wildlife trade fuelled by Chinese demand, FFI said in a statement.

The organisation is working with Myanmar's Forest Department to promote conservation of the species and it is hoped the proposed Imawbum National Park boundaries will be designated by the end of this year. The initiative will also see efforts directed to promoting awareness among local indigenous communities about the threats the red pandas face.

FFI said hunting has declined since the group worked with ethnic Law Waw and Lisu communities in

the area to establish a community-managed no-hunting zone and employed community rangers for enforcement.

While the creation of the national park would offer protection for red pandas in the area, it is unlikely to stop illegal hunting and logging activities completely. Frank Momberg, FFI's program director for Myanmar, said international cooperation is required to address the broader issue of illegal logging.

“We hope that the national park designation combined with Myanmar's recent raw log export ban will encourage the Chinese government to stop loggers venturing into Myanmar,” he said.

Thai court dismisses suit against activist

A BANGKOK court has dismissed a defamation suit against migrant rights activist Andy Hall on October 29 on the grounds that the police did not sufficiently involve the Thai Attorney General's Office or Mr Hall's defence team during their investigation.

However, the activist's legal woes are far from over. The case is the first of several civil and criminal suits brought against the Yangon-based researcher by Natural Fruit Company in response to Mr Hall's documenta-

tion of the exploitation and abuse of mostly Myanmar migrant workers in its factories. The report was published by the Helsinki-based advocacy group Finnwatch.

On October 30, the same court ruled that hearings for a second charge of civil defamation will be pushed back until after more serious criminal charges are decided in November.

The hearing for these charges, which include violating the “computer crimes act” and criminal defamation,

will begin on November 17 in Bangkok.

Even with the first charge dropped, Mr Hall still faces up to seven years in prison and fines of US\$10 million.

He said he was pleased the charge had been dismissed but disappointed the Thai authorities were not doing more to rein in Natural Fruit. The “Thai gov ongoing lack of willingness/failure to see #naturalfruit harassment stopped well reflects dire migrant rights situation in Thailand,” he posted on Twitter. - Bill O'Toole

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Views

Conflict as an opportunity

How communal conflict could open the door to much-needed interfaith dialogue

KHIN SU WAI
jasminekhin@gmail.com

TATSUSHI Arai is an independent scholar of conflict resolution from Japan and an associate professor of peacebuilding and conflict transformation at the School for International Training (SIT) Graduate Institute in the United States. Mr Arai has extensive practical experience in diverse conflict-affected societies, including Myanmar. Here he gives his views on Myanmar's interreligious conflicts and the proposed interfaith marriage law.

Religious differences play a significant role in Myanmar's intercommunal conflicts. How can these conflicts be overcome?

The most important long-term effort to overcome these conflicts is to facilitate sustained humanising dialogue between Myanmar's diverse religious communities and within each community. This dialogue must take into consideration not only religious differences, but also the role of nationalism, ethnicity, gender, seniority, socio-economic class, urban-rural divides and regional differences. These are all interconnected causes of the religion-inspired conflicts.

What concrete steps can we take to initiate a dialogue like this?

Two kinds of activities are especially important to carry out interreligious dialogue in Myanmar. The first is the establishment of inter-religious peacebuilding committees. We have seen a good example of this in Mandalay in the aftermath of the recent communal violence. These committees can proactively verify the accuracy of potentially harmful rumours, become a bridge-builder between opposing groups and help create a safe space for conciliation dialogue between conflict parties.

The second suggested activity is to identify and share useful methods of interreligious dialogue across regions. One simple and useful approach that I have used

in different ethnic Burmese communities is a role reversal between people of different religious backgrounds. This approach asks Buddhists to place themselves in Muslims' shoes and Muslims to place themselves in Buddhists' shoes. Hindus, Christians, and others can adopt the same method and adjust it to meet their unique needs. Once people are placed in different roles, I ask members of each group to discuss and present what they think is the most beautiful aspect of the religion to which they were assigned. After group presentations, all dialogue participants will then be asked to represent their own religious identities, form discussion groups based on their real identities, and answer the same question as

Religious leaders on both sides must come face to face to openly discuss the historical roots of their fears about the other side's threatening presence.

before in the presence of the other religious groups. Interfaith dialogue of this nature can be done in communities, classrooms and workplaces throughout Myanmar.

What is your opinion on the proposed interfaith marriage law?

I have met many prominent Buddhist and Muslim leaders and learned their perspectives on this subject. I see the serious concerns on the part of the Buddhist leaders advocating the law. However, I do not see why and how the proposed bills on religious conversion,

marriage, monogamy and population control, with a clause on the punishment of violators, could possibly resolve the social roots of their concerns. In other words, I recognise a significant gap between the means and ends that the law's proponents have in mind.

What then should be done to address the underlying issues that concern advocates of these laws?

Let us take the stated objective of population control as an example and illustrate how the principle of conflict resolution applies to the social context in which the marriage law has been debated. To begin with, to the best of my knowledge, there is no conclusive evidence to demonstrate that either polygamy or interreligious marriage per se is responsible for excessive population growth. On the other hand, there is well-established evidence to show that poverty and lack of education drive population growth, especially when these social factors affect girls and their mothers.

Given this empirical understanding of the issue, I wonder what would happen if we reallocate the significant resources and political capital spent on the marriage law campaign to well-organised, multi-year initiatives that dramatically expand basic education and reduce poverty, starting with the regions in which interreligious marriages have been a serious issue.

Once a significant portion of the previously uneducated population receives basic education, and once opportunities for livelihood development expand, young girls and their families can make better choices about their marriages and their religious practices.

Finally, and most fundamentally, senior religious leaders on both sides must come face to face to openly discuss the historical roots of their unprocessed fears about the other side's threatening presence, and encourage their community members to do the same at the grassroots level.

Slowing of mom the death of the



AUNG NAING OO

newsroom@mmtimes.com

FOLLOWING the September round of peace talks, concerns have arisen about the future of the peace process. Some have talked as if there was a major deadlock. Some have even described it as a death knell for the peace process.

But from an insider's point of view, the last round of talks did not end in a deadlock. Far from it, in fact; perhaps the situation can best be described as a temporary lull in the process.

Since the last negotiations, many informal meetings have taken place. The whole peace process is most certainly alive and kicking.

It is true there were disappointments – both inside and outside the negotiating rooms – after the September talks. Some openly expressed their dismay at the results, while others kept it to themselves so as not to alienate their counterparts or jeopardise the peace process further.

There was so much hope before the talks that the remaining issues in the nationwide ceasefire talks could be sorted out. Before they began there was even discussion of a possible signing date. Preparations for the next step – the development of the framework for political dialogue – were being made in earnest.

How could anyone manage such high expectations? Myanmar had been on a roll and enthusiasm for the peace process had never been higher.

But negotiations happen in fluid situations. The peace talks in Myanmar are no exception.

These talks have taken place against the backdrop of larger social, economic and political reforms.

They are neither linear nor straightforward. As one expert put it to me recently, the ceasefire talks are not conventional in the sense that there are many different groups involved,



A Tatmadaw soldier stands guard in Myawaddy.

each with varying dynamics.

Politics outside the negotiating room can also turn a promising situation into a deadlock or stalemate. There are arguments that the September talks were greatly influenced by outside politics, happening away from the negotiation table. It could very well be true.

I have said over and over again that the current draft nationwide ceasefire agreement is a political document rather than a ceasefire. If it had been a typical ceasefire negotiation, it could have been concluded within six months.

Many international experts have come to us, offering useful tips and advice on how to negotiate. Some of them say tackle the easy issues first. Others say we must start with the difficult ones.

However, nothing can prepare you for the surprises that often occur during such negotiations. Our experiences tell us that there are no clear rules as to how to negotiate. The issues can be

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Dated. 3rd November, 2014

entum not peace process



Kayin State, last month. Photo: Kaung Htet

easy or difficult depending on the situation and the context. They are often mixed. Some we think will be easy but turn out to be difficult, while difficult issues are resolved in no time.

Likewise, there are arguments as to what should come first: a ceasefire or political dialogue.

As the ceasefire talks have dragged on, some are saying it would have been better to start political dialogue with the 14 ethnic armed groups that have signed bilateral ceasefires with the government. There were even suggestions that we should not have embarked on a nationwide ceasefire.

But we firmly believe in “stopping the killing” before tackling anything else in regards to armed conflict. As a result, we believe nationwide ceasefire talks are essential. We want to go into political dialogue without worrying about ceasefire violations. Only a nationwide ceasefire with proper monitoring mechanisms can give us the peace of mind to focus on political dialogue.

There is a perception that the peace process involves only two sides - the government and ethnic armed groups. In reality, however, the nationwide ceasefire talks are multiparty negotiations.

On the ethnic armed-group side, the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT) comprises 16 groups. Its members have had to spend much time negotiating to secure a common position. There are other ethnic armed groups not involved in that process and, although they are not around the table, their existence and role in the peace process is clear.

On the government side, there is not only the executive branch; the parliamentary and military representatives have also played critical roles.

This makes the negotiation process exciting but it has also frustrated some stakeholders.

As we are now at the tail end of negotiations it is entirely natural to experience difficulties. All negotiators have pushed back some difficult issues toward the end.

There may be other issues that can stall or prolong the negotiations in Myanmar: the effects of the war economy, geopolitics, and concerns that one side may take advantage of the other's willingness to concede ground. Equally critical is the inability to think through the whole process, which creates a fear of going into uncharted water.

There are also issues such as the spoiler problem and small group dynamics that may determine the outcome of a negotiation.

In a final analysis though, no one has turned their back on the peace process in Myanmar.

For us within the process, the short lull has given us an opportunity to stand back and review events to date – what worked, what did not and what went wrong. It has given us the chance to pause for a reality check. In some ways, it has been a blessing in disguise.

Aung Naing Oo is associate director of the Peace Dialogue Program at the Myanmar Peace Center. The opinions expressed here are his own.

Aquino’s sure touch deserts him



ROGER MITTON
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IN recent months, the shine has gone off several political leaders who were previously so well regarded and respected that they appeared beyond reproach.

It has happened to relative stalwarts like United States President Barack Obama and Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, as well as to neophytes like India's PM Narendra Modi and Indonesia's President Joko Widowi. So it is clearly not due to familiarity breeding contempt, nor to the bumbling inexperience of new kids on the block.

Of course, like rock stars and football heroes, no politician remains popular indefinitely; sooner or later, no matter how well they have performed in the past, their lustre dims and the public turns away from them. It has applied to leaders here, as both the much-respected head of state, President U Thein Sein, and the once-charismatic opposition leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, have seen their popularity begin to wane.

But no leader in this region has witnessed such a precipitous fall in the public's estimation as President Benigno Aquino of the Philippines. After assuming office in 2010, Aquino barely put a foot wrong and his leadership of an unusually competent administration reversed the image of his nation as the region's basketcase.

In fact, the Philippines streaked into the lead as Southeast Asia's fastest-growing economy, while concurrently Aquino forged a peace deal with Muslim insurgents and launched a war on corruption.

Indeed, his forthright attack on endemic graft and bribery targeted not only lower-ranked bureaucrats, but also the high and mighty.

Among his first victims were

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, who quit after facing charges of betraying the public trust, and the Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona, who was impeached for failing to declare personal assets of US\$2.4 million.

Then Aquino's attention turned to his predecessor, former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who was first detained for electoral fraud and then accused of taking \$8.8 million from state lottery funds. She remains in custody.

These high-profile cases set the tone for Aquino's anti-corruption purge, which continued in tandem with his economic revival policies.

He also inducted a more steely foreign minister, Albert del Rosario, and directed him to take a stern line against China's incremental occupation of offshore territories claimed by the Philippines.

Nothing has dented his image so much as when he mused about running for a second term.

By refusing to be cowed by Beijing and steadfastly asserting Manila's right to islands abutting its coastline, Aquino's administration won tremendous kudos at home. It also won friends among fellow ASEAN members who are locked in similarly tense sovereignty disputes with China.

All these moves engendered a feelgood factor that spurred investment in the domestic economy and, together with higher overseas remittances, sent Philippine growth rates soaring. Aquino, of course, reaped the benefit and opinion polls gave him an approval rating of around 70 percent.

But that was then. His approval figures have sunk like a stone during the past few months.

Why? Well, it has been a combination of factors, but nothing has dented his image so much as when he mused about running for a

second term – something that happens to be illegal under the current constitution, which limits presidents to a single six-year term.

It appears that few people, aside from Aquino and his inner coterie, think much of this idea; indeed, most seem to find it offensive. An October 2 survey by the respected Pulse Asia organisation showed that 62pc of Filipinos opposed any constitutional amendment to allow Aquino to run again.

As Richard Heydarian, a political scientist at De La Salle University in Manila, noted, “Aquino's flirtation with a second term in office, which would require a revision of the 1987 constitution, set off alarm bells among political elites and everyday voters alike.”

Other issues also kicked in to accentuate a negative swing against the president. After Typhoon Yolanda roared through the central Philippines and wreaked massive death and destruction, Aquino was chastised for his poor response and the way he tried to shift blame onto local officials.

As well, the fruits of the very welcome economic upsurge have not been spread equitably among the masses. Poverty levels and jobless rates have not improved significantly. Also, Aquino's much-lauded anti-corruption campaign has become increasingly perceived as being directed against opposition figures, rather than members of the administration.

As a result, Aquino's approval ratings have plummeted by as much as 20pc, reaching their lowest level since his election four years ago. Thankfully, he has now shelved the idea of a second term and has instead said that his preferred successor would be Interior Secretary Manuel Roxas, an Aquino loyalist who unfortunately has little public support.

So, as the president's lame duck years draw near, there are concerns that he may later be targeted for retribution; in fact, some observers suggest that is the reason for his recent missteps and loss of political awareness. The man needs to get his act together, and to do it soon. If not, his good deeds may be forgotten and attention will focus instead on what went wrong.

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MYANMA Economic Holdings Limited has won a dispute over the ownership of Myanmar Brewery Limited, the military-owned conglomerate has announced, and will now accelerate plans to buy out its joint venture partner.

MEHL has been locked in a legal battle with Singapore-based Fraser and Neave Limited (F&N), which owns 55 percent of Myanmar Brewery since August 2013, when it announced it would submit the dispute to an arbitration tribunal in Singapore.

Arbitrators on October 31 upheld MEHL's right to buy F&N's shares in the brewery, enabling it to increase its stake from 45pc.

US MILLION

\$246

Value MEHL has offered F&N for its 55pc stake of Myanmar Brewery, which so far F&N has rejected.

"We are very pleased with the ruling. It vindicates our legal position that the [joint venture agreement] clearly provides for us to buy F&N's shares after

they failed to meet their contractual obligations," said MEHL deputy managing director U Myint Aung in a statement.

F&N was a partner with Heineken in Asia Pacific Breweries Limited (APB) until 2012, and also had a long-standing partnership with UMEHL in Myanmar. In 2012, control of Fraser and Neave was bought for US\$2.2 billion by ThaiBev, owned by billionaire Charoen Sirivadhanabhakdi.

F&N sold its other beer investments to Heineken but the Dutch firm did not take on the Myanmar stake, making it F&N's sole beer holding. The brewery produces popular domestic brands Myanmar Beer and Andaman Gold, and brews Tiger Beer under licence.

MEHL argued that ThaiBev's buy-out of F&N constituted a change in ownership and therefore violated the joint venture terms, which gave the partners first right of first refusal to purchase each others' shares before they are offered to a third party.

In November 2013, MEHL said in a rare public statement that it had started arbitration proceedings after negotiations between the two companies broke down.

Following the October 31 ruling, MEHL will now be able to purchase F&N's shares at a price set by a valuer agreed upon by both companies. F&N said in a statement that MEHL had sought to purchase its 55pc stake for US\$246 million. Huang Hong Peng, chief executive officer of beer at F&N, described this figure as "grossly inadequate". This price was set by the Controller of Military Accounts (CMA), which, though authorised to audit in Myanmar, is not a certified public accountant, a lawyer familiar with the case told *The Myanmar Times*.

The case was touted as a test for

Myanmar's legal framework and foreign investment environment. U Myint Aung said that the ruling should bolster confidence in the way the country handles such disputes.

"It is very important for Myanmar that foreign investors have confidence in the way we do business. The conduct of this arbitration shows our commitment to the rule of law and that we will always adhere to due process," U Myint Aung said.

The beer market in Myanmar is forecast to see considerable growth. State- and military-owned enterprises have had a virtual monopoly in the sector for decades but the government decided to open it up to foreign brewers, including Heineken's APB, last year.

Figures from Euromonitor International show that the legal beer market hit 172 million litres in 2013, with annual growth of 5.5pc since 2009. In dollar terms, beer sales amounted to US\$265 million in 2013, and have posted 14pc annual growth between 2009 and 2013. Annual growth of 21pc is expected between 2014 and 2018, when the market is forecast to reach \$675 million.

Despite the growth, beer consumption in Myanmar remains low compared to other countries in the region. Myanmar drinkers consumed just 3.2 litres per person in 2013, far behind neighbouring Vietnam, where per-capita consumption was 36 litres, and the Asia Pacific region average of 18 litres.

Danish brewer Carlsberg will officially open its production facility in early December. Dutch rival Heineken is constructing its own brewery.

F&N said it plans to "study ways to enable it to maintain its presence in the Myanmar market, which still has great growth potential and remains of keen interest".



IN PICTURES

Photo: Yu Yu

Three's a crowd

Telenor has liftoff in Yangon. The M SIM cards – in Myanmar's largest Ooredoo in offering service in Yang

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Attorneys at Law, Thailand)

Dated. 3rd November, 2014

S'pore wins in take two f

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A US\$1.4 billion contract for an airport outside Yangon has been awarded to a Singapore-led consortium, the Department of Civil Aviation has announced, after talks with the original tender winner stalled earlier this year.

A consortium comprised of Singapore's Yongnam Holdings, Changi Airport Planners and Engineers, and Japan's JGC Corporation was selected by the Ministry of Transport on October 29 to construct Hanthawaddy International Airport in Bago Region. Hanthawaddy is the largest of three airport projects being undertaken in an attempt to modernise the country's main air hubs in preparation for anticipated future growth in arrivals.

Department of Civil Aviation director general U Win Swe Htun said the project has gained plenty of attention since it was begun in 2012, but has so far been beset with rumours.

"We have carefully chosen one company from the last two competitors," he said at a press conference on October 29.

A consortium led by Incheon International Airport Corporation of South Korea won the original contract to build the airport in August 2013 but the tender was reopened in February when the government and officials from the group could not agree on certain aspects of the South Korean proposal.

Department of Civil Aviation officials said that there were disagreements with the Incheon group over the capacity of the airport, with Incheon proposing that the airport be built to handle 10 million visitors a

year, 2 million less than the DCA had targeted. There were also significant issues over the way in which the project would be financed, the DCA said. Incheon International Airport Corporation did not respond to requests for comment.

U Win Swe Htun said the DCA had requested Incheon change its proposals to adapt to the DCA's vision, but it had refused.

"We told them our desires but they rejected them, so we have chosen Yongnam instead," he said.



An artist's impression of the proposed Hanthawaddy airport. Photo: Supplied

Rice traders stuck until China rice seizures stop

BUSINESS 29



Government expresses displeasure at under-used industrial land

PROPERTY 36

Exchange Rates (October 31 close)		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Euro	K1250	K1270
Malaysia Ringitt	K302	K303
Singapore Dollar	K775	K782
Thai Baht	K30	K31
US Dollar	K1002	K1006



Kyat depreciates past barrier of K1000 per USD

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THE kyat depreciated in value past the psychological barrier of K1000 against the US dollar last week, though experts downplayed concern it will significantly affect the economy.

The Central Bank of Myanmar's reference rate stood at K1006 per dollar on October 31, capping a week of declines against major international currencies, also including the euro and yen.

Values of about K1000 per dollar are near the highest the kyat has traded at since April 2012, when the Central Bank implemented a managed floating exchange rate in the place of an official but unrealistic exchange rate of K6 per dollar. The kyat then almost immediately moved to K800 per dollar.

The kyat has been depreciating from rates around K990 recorded in mid-October, and about K970 a dollar in mid-September.

"There are a number of reasons the exchange rate fluctuates, and speculation also has a big impact," said a Central Bank director, who requested not to be named.

The Central Bank sells daily lots of dollars and purchases kyats, partly in an attempt to restore value in the local currency. However, the Myanmar kyat has also declined

against regional currencies like the Thai baht, Singapore dollar and Chinese yuan.

The kyat generally follows seasonal fluctuations, with demand for the local currency being highest during harvests and other periods of high exports. With the rice harvest not set to begin in most of the country until December, demand for the kyat has wavered in recent weeks.

Downtown money changers say business is brisk, as customers try to switch to the US dollar now to avoid further depreciation.

U Naing Gyi, a 50-year-old money changer on Bo Aung Kyaw Road, said his phone line is constantly ringing with customer requests.

He added the US dollar and gold are the two more important exchange

rates in Myanmar, with other currencies also based on these two rates.

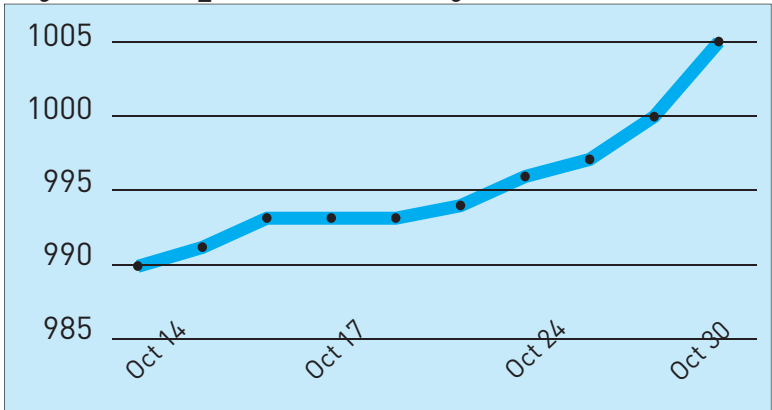
"I cannot supply customers as much as I would like to right now," he said. "Strong demand means it's unlikely the rate will decline easily."

Ministry of Commerce economic advisor U Maung Aung said the decline in the kyat's value has not yet been large enough to cause problems.

Though imports have outpaced exports by about \$3.1 billion over the last seven months, U Maung Aung claimed the expanding trade deficit is likely not the main reason for its decline, as much of the imports are being used to generate economic activity inside Myanmar.

Most imports are paid for with US dollars, adding value to the green-back against the kyat.

Kyats required to buy a US dollar



Source: Central Bank of Myanmar website

Norwegian telco rolled out services – and 1 million city on Sunday, October 26. The firm joins MPT and gon. Catherine Trautwein

for airport build

Myanmar officials on October 29 hat said that they are now in talks with the Japan International Cooperation Agency to cover part of the construction cost with development assistance. The project's completion date has now been pushed back from 2016 to December 2019.

The Singaporean consortium, as well as a consortium led by France's VINCI and another led by Japan's Taisei airports were originally selected as backups to the Incheon group. They were asked in March to resubmit proposals, based on which the Singaporean consortium was selected.

Located on a 9000-acre (3642-hectare) site about 77 kilometres (48 miles) northeast of Yangon near Bago, Hanthawaddy was first slated for development in the early 1990s. Work began in March 1994 but was stopped in October 2003.

The project has been criticised for its distance from Yangon and the poor quality of the existing road that links the two cities. The road would need to be substantially enlarged and upgraded in order to cut travel time, but to date there has been no information given by the government on if these upgrades would be made, or if plans are being made for public transport links

with the city.

U Win Swe Htun also downplayed concerns Hanthawaddy could attract funding to the detriment of other sectors, adding loans will be requested from Japan to fund a portion of the project.

The project is the largest of three that the government has unveiled in order to upgrade the country's air infrastructure, amid strong growth in foreign arrivals. More than 2 million foreigners visited Myanmar in 2013, according to Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung, and the ministry is targeting 5 million a year by 2015.

A consortium led by Pioneer Aerodrome Services, a subsidiary of Asia World, was selected in August 2013 to overhaul Yangon International Airport and increase its capacity from 2.7 million to 6 million passengers a year by 2015. Work on the domestic terminal has already started.

Meanwhile, a consortium comprising Mitsubishi, Japan Airlines and SPA Project Management were selected to overhaul Mandalay International Airport, which opened in 2000 but until very recently was operating at well below capacity. Several regional airlines have slowly added international flights to Mandalay.



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Smaller foreign companies face restrictions on leases



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SMALLER-SCALE foreign businesspeople are having difficulty securing long-term leases, which is hampering foreign investment, businesspeople say.

Foreign businesspeople investing large amounts in sectors like manufacturing usually apply for permits through the Myanmar Investment Commission and can receive leases lasting up to 50 years, with the possibility of extensions. Investment that does not require MIC approval is limited to a one-year lease in most cases.

The requirement to renegotiate leases and possibly being forced to relocate each year adds to the difficulties of doing business in Myanmar, said one foreigner running a PR company.

"I could face difficulty if the land owner does not renew the lease for another year or if the price increases significantly," he said. "Many foreign businesspeople are challenged by this limit."

Difficulties securing long-term leases could be somewhat of a barrier for foreign businesses looking to enter Myanmar, and was a complaint at a recent Myanmar investment summit

in New York, said MIC secretary U Aung Naing Oo.

MIC is presently discussing the issue with the Ministry of Home Affairs, though a solution may be some time in coming. "Right now we know this could be a barrier for foreign businesspeople to some extent," he said.

Foreigners and foreign companies are not allowed to own land in Myanmar and may only have leases lasting up to one year under the Transfer of Immoveable Property Restriction Act, said Kelvin Chia Yangon principal foreign consulting attorney Pedro Jose Bernardo.

The exception comes for firms with investment permits under the Myanmar Foreign Investment Law, which allows foreign firms to hold leases for up to 50 years, with two possible extensions of 10 years each.

'Foreign investors would, of course, prefer predictability and continuity in operations.'

Pedro Jose Bernardo
Kelvin Chia Yangon

Not all foreign investors, particularly those not in manufacturing or industrial activities, necessarily obtain an MIC permit. "Obviously, if you are one such non-MIC foreign company with a one-year lease, you are generally at the mercy of your landlord, because you can be evicted at the end of one year - land security, in this sense, is difficult," he said.

"Foreign investors would, of course, prefer predictability and continuity in operations - having short lease tenures [without an MIC Permit] would increase investor insecurity in this case."

Economist and business observer U Hla Maung said securing leases is one of a number of legal limitations on foreign business in Myanmar that ought to be addressed.

Foreign businesses' attempts to secure long-term leases is an ongoing issue, but some local landowners avoid it and simply rent to foreigners for longer periods than allowed by the law.

"However, there may be foreigners who don't want to work illegally, so official liberalisation [of the restriction] would be better in the long term," he said.

"The country really needs to attract more and more FDI, so we need liberalise any restriction if it is really a barrier," U Hla Maung added.

— Additional reporting
by Jeremy Mullins

Rice federation to introduce Warehouse Financing at Apex

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THE Myanmar Rice Federation plans to open several warehouses for rice traders to store their product for use as collateral to receive bank loans, said its chair U Chit Khaing.

The system would alleviate the need to sell rice immediately even if prices are low to pay for a sudden expense. Instead, traders will be able to store the rice at the warehouses for a fee, using it as collateral for loans from U Chit Khaing-led Myanmar Apex Bank.

Speaking exclusively to *The Myanmar Times*, U Chit Khaing said, "If we can set up the system, farmers can keep their paddy in the warehouse till prices improve, while taking out bank loans and repaying their debts."

U Soe Tun, joint secretary of the MRF, said a pilot project for the Warehouse Financing scheme would be launched in three townships in Ayeyarwady, Yangon and Bago regions.

Local rice prices have been in decline as China shuttered its border to imports from

Myanmar beginning in late October. Some rice industry experts have suggested that the government should buy paddy directly, or lend to traders so they can buy from farmers, in an effort to support local farmers.

Freedom Farmers' League chair U Thein Aung said, "We have approached the government in the hope of getting loans, even at a higher interest rate than the bank's."

But U Chit Khaing said buying rice would not reduce farmers' losses. "We're going with the paddy storage system," he said.



U Chit Khaing.
Photo: Staff

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The rice is piling up in Muse city warehouses.
Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

What to do when the rice trade stops

China’s decision to effectively close the border to rice imports leaves Myanmar’s farmers and traders in limbo



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U SAI Kyaw has about 50 tonnes of rice sitting in a Muse warehouse a couple kilometres from the Chinese border. It’s a problem. His firm’s capital is tied up in the rice, and he would like to export it. Until that happens, he is not able to buy more from farmers in the rice baskets of Ayeyarwady, Bago and Sagaing regions.

Two months ago it would have been easy to shift. However, the stock has been stranded since Chinese authorities effectively sealed the border to rice imports in late September. Rice is piling up at dozens of other warehouses south of Muse, and there are no buyers in sight.

In good times U Sai Kyaw was able to sell about 50 tonnes a month to Chinese buyers, who come from Ruili, just across the nearby border. They then transport it to China for use mostly in rice noodles and snacks.

While legal from Myanmar’s perspective, China officially bans rice imports from Myanmar due to a lack of agreements governing the trade. However, its border officials turned a blind eye to imports, enabling Myanmar’s rice exports to China to grow from nearly nothing in 2011 to 752,000 tonnes – or 59 percent of Myanmar’s total rice exports – in the 2012-13 fiscal year.

Myanmar’s rice exports are generally of lower quality than its competitors such as Vietnam, Thailand and Pakistan. However, buyers, particularly in remote Yunnan Province, have been willing to offer top dollar for even poor-quality Myanmar rice for use in processed, rice-based foods.

This all changed in late September. Chinese border officials began seizing the cargo from nearly every truck, launching a crackdown on a trade that had been steadily growing in importance. With little recourse, traders have stopped trying to ship rice across the border. Where once more than 100 truckloads a day would cross the border by road or water, as few as two or three are attempting it now.

Chinese officials have not yet publicly explained the seizures – the embassy in Yangon has not answered repeated requests for comment – but traders say it may be linked to China’s ongoing rice harvest. By shutting off Myanmar exports, the idea is that Chinese farmers will receive a higher price for their own crop.

Rice trader U Min Thein said there have been other crackdowns in the past by Chinese officials but they have been less severe and shorter in duration.

“It’s tough to negotiate with China on the issue,” he said.

Rice trade with China is a relatively new phenomenon. Until 2012, China was only a minor importer of rice, not just from Myanmar but from the rest of the world. In turn, Myanmar’s largest rice exports were sent by sea to African and Middle Eastern countries.

Although China still produces large quantities of rice, one reason it imports could be to take advantage of a spread between domestic and international prices. Another is that Chinese consumers are diversifying their food consumption to different types of rice, according to a 2013 article, “Game changers in the global rice market”, by the International Rice Research Institute’s Samarendu Mohanty.

“Like India, nobody expected China to come close to displacing Nigeria as the top importer in 2012,” the article said.

‘The seizures have been so strict this month. These days are the worst.’

U Sai Kyaw
Rice trader

Increased Chinese demand has been a bright spot for exporters in an increasingly gloomy international market. International prices have declined about 20pc this year, heading for the biggest loss since 2001 and keeping a lid on global food costs that the United Nations said fell for a sixth month in September.

The price for 5pc broken Thai white rice, an Asian benchmark, was at \$426 a tonne on October 22, according to the Thai Rice Exporters Association. High-quality rice cost about K16,000 per 50 kilogram bag in Yangon markets last week.

U Sai Kyaw said before the recent actions, Chinese border officials usually seized about three shipments a month, though this figure had increased in previous Septembers and Octobers during China’s harvest.

“Everyone knows that Yunnan province needs rice and our country has excess rice,” he said. “But the seizures have been so strict this month. These days are the worst.”

While the 50 tonnes stored in his warehouse will likely not become inedible any time soon, it will degrade in

quality, losing taste and texture.

“It will be hard to wait until the trade resumes,” he said.

While most border trade between Muse and Ruili goes through the Mein Way gate in the centre of town, smuggling and grey market trade in goods such as rice often happens at informal river crossings just west of the city.

Authorities generally look the other way. When *The Myanmar Times* visited one such river crossing, it was within sight of a Myanmar police kiosk guarding a nearby bridge. At this informal crossing point, the smugglers quoted a price of K30,000 for reporters to rent a boat to make the four-minute crossing, including a free return trip.

Myanmar authorities have launched a number of high-profile seizures on illegal trade with the Ministry of Commerce’s Mobile Enforcement Teams. Still, with Myanmar’s rice exports legal from Nay Pyi Taw’s point of view, local authorities do what they can to support the trade.

U Tin Ye Win is the director at the 105 Mile Zone, the customs post near Muse where exports are processed before transiting to China.

“Trading is just a part of the political situation,” he said. “For rice, China pretends they don’t need much. When there are incidents between Myanmar and China, they say that your country’s economy depends on our country, you don’t dare losing contact with us.”

Despite the dispute, the 105 Mile Zone continues to process rice exports for future exports. U Tin Ye Win said much of his focus is instead on ending trade in illegal goods.

Rice dealers say they have little recourse but to sit and wait. Many traders have left staff to oversee their Muse warehouses and returned to their homes in Mandalay, as winter starts to chill northern Shan State.

U Sai Kyaw said it will be difficult to re-orient trade in the short term, as much of the export industry is geared toward China.

While there are small amounts of exports to the European Union, where Myanmar rice enjoys preferential market access, EU quality standards are often unattainable for locally milled rice. India has also requested rice imports to feed its remote northeastern states, though it is relatively small at 20,000 tonnes a month.

Unlike China, which wants rice for use in noodles and snacks, African markets want rice for eating directly, so tend to have higher quality standards. Also, it is easier and cheaper to transport rice to Africa by ship than by the snaking two-lane highway through Shan State to China, so African buyers offer lower prices.

U Min Thein said he is hopeful the border seizures could end as soon as this month. The longer he is forced to wait, the less business he can do.

“But I’m most worried about the

farmers,” he said. “Without traders buying their rice, prices will decline.”

High-level officials have not been idle since the seizures began.

A memorandum of understanding setting out a sanitary and phytosanitary agreement, which governs health standards of rice imports, was inked on September 25. Chinese and Myanmar officials have also started negotiations as to exactly how much rice can officially cross the border.

Myanmar Rice Federation chair U Chit Khaing said the first official rice exports to China will begin with 200,000 tonnes early in 2015. Half will be shipped through the usual routes at Muse, while the other 100,000 tonnes will be shipped by sea through the Straits of Malacca to China’s eastern seaboard – the first time this has been allowed.

China has also formed a committee comprising officials from the national and Yunnan governments to negotiate. Myanmar has reciprocated by forming a 36-member committee comprising rice businesspeople for

the ongoing talks.

“I think the first ever [official] border trade of rice to China will be able to start in January, but there are so many things still to be discussed with the Chinese committee,” U Chit Khaing told *The Myanmar Times* in an exclusive interview.

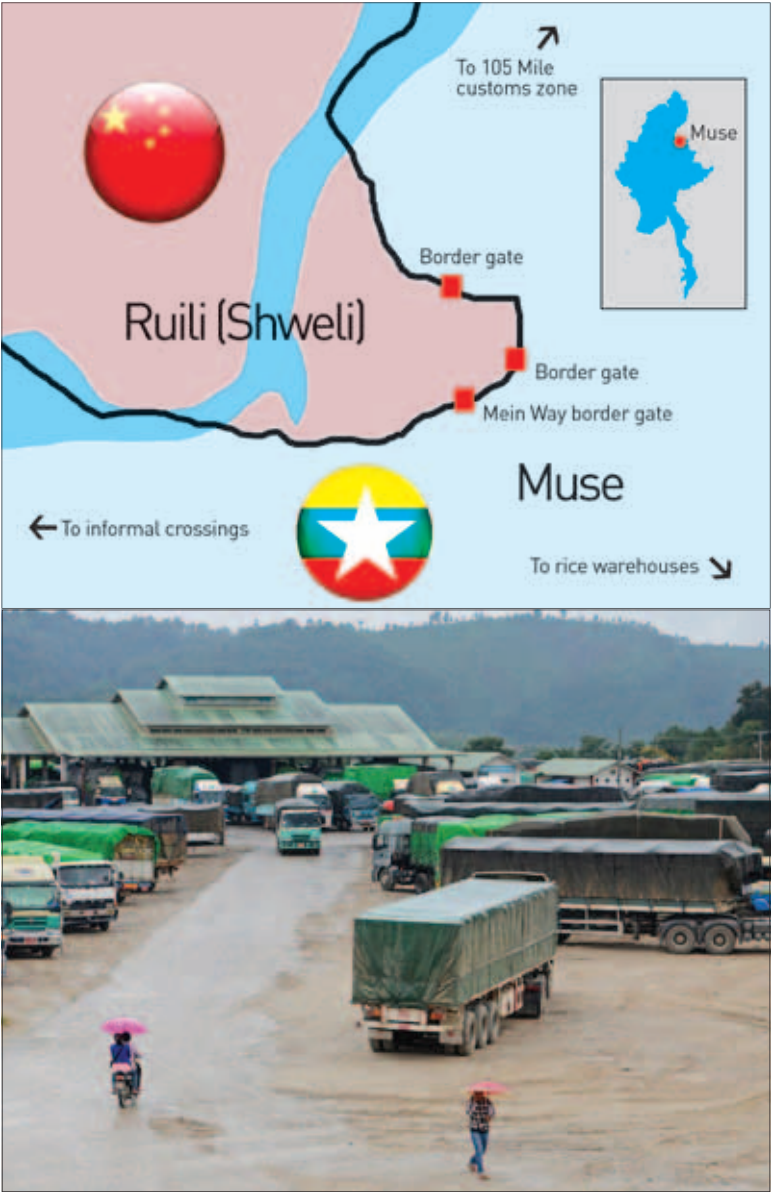
The negotiators also hope to deal with taxes levied on the informal trade, which have run as high as 30pc. U Chit Khaing said Myanmar is aiming for a quota system allowing tax-free imports into China, similar to what Beijing has granted to Vietnam and Pakistan.

U Sai Kyaw says he doesn’t know what he will do if the border stays shut.

The domestic rice harvest peaks from December through February, and if the trade to China is not open then, prices will decline and farmers will be the hardest hit.

“China is the exit for Myanmar’s rice,” he said. “What happens here will impact the whole country.”

– Additional reporting by Zaw Htike and Bloomberg



Trucks marshall at the customs centre at 105 Mile Zone. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

Toyota keeps pace with changing market

Long the dominant used car in Myanmar, Toyota aims to build a reputation as a new car brand worth purchasing



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CARS from Japanese automaker Toyota are the most widely driven automobile in Myanmar at present, but the firm is shifting gears as new automobiles gain in popularity.

The domestic auto market has been dominated by used Toyotas, with its Probox model a particular common sight on the streets of Yangon. Yet a 2013 government decision to allow extensive imports of new cars resulted in a sea change for the market, with world-class brands such as Toyota, Ford, Mercedes and Mitsubishi opening dealerships and beginning campaigns to woo increasingly affluent buyers.

While many of these North American, European and Asian brands start with relatively blank slates in the country, Toyota, or at least its used models, has an extensive local history.

"Toyota competes more with used Toyotas than competing with other brands in the market," said Ko Myo Myint Thein from TTAS Co, the sole official local dealer of Toyotas.

The low cost and extensive use of used models mean it is difficult to compete on pure volume terms, so TTAS is focusing on selling new Toyotas on the strength of their quality and the service the firm provides.

Purchasing used cars can result in problems for customers, he said. Showrooms have difficulty repairing faults on used models, leaving them to solve the problems themselves. Used Toyotas are also imported to Myanmar through non-official companies, meaning these imports are not subject to a



Toyota unveiled new imports to Myanmar last month. So far they're nicer-looking than a Probox. Photo: Staff

number of protections provided to legitimately-purchased new cars.

Inoue Hisayuki, Toyota chief executive officer for Asia and the Middle East, said the firm takes responsibility for its cars that are legitimately imported - in Myanmar's case this means only new models.

Speaking at a Bangkok press conference on October 16, Mr Inoue said the firm is not particularly involved in the local used car market.

Targeting the local market

Ko Myo Myint Thein said TTAS and Toyota are working on adapting its imports to meet local demand. Currently it sets a target and imports

automobiles based on anticipated demand, but then adjusts imports based on market realities.

"Later we will meet our targets, as the new car market develops," he said.

Toyota has a number of strong selling points for its new models including a fair price, good quality and readily available spare parts and mechanics familiar with the brand.

However, used Toyotas are known for being an economical option. Most used Toyotas currently on the road are used vehicles and are generally right-hand drive, less suitable for Myanmar's roads than the new Toyotas which are left-hand drive.

A complete switch in consumer purchases from used to new models may take some time. Taxi driver Ko Kyaw Zaw said as much as he would like to upgrade, new cars are out of reach for most people.

"I think only bosses can buy brand new Toyotas. For the middle class, they buy used cars," he said.

There are plenty of mechanics able to service used models, with lots of spare parts available in the country, making used models an attractive proposition, he said.

One advantage for new Toyotas is the quality servicing provided by the dealer. Ko Kyaw Zaw said the local dealers should continue to develop

its strong service.

Aung Gabar Motor Services imports used Toyotas, which are its most popular brand, said deputy manager Ko Min Min.

"We can't compete with the brand-new showrooms in terms of services or guarantees, but we sell our models at a cheaper price," he said.

"But people who want high models or the latest cars usually buy them brand-new."

No factory plans yet

Mr Inoue said Toyota currently has no plans to build a plant in Myanmar. While tax rates are currently quite high on imports, it will soon drop to zero for imports from ASEAN member countries such as Thailand under the bloc's free trade agreement.

Production facilities often cost into the billions of dollars, so stable policies are necessary before building automobile factories. Thailand also already has a number of Toyota plants and can produce world-class automobiles, he said.

Ko Nyan Hlaing, an automobile aficionado, said Toyota dealers in Thailand focus on quality service, a focus he said he expects to see replicated in Myanmar.

The firm presently has 2014 Prado, Land Cruiser, Hilux, Camry and Corolla models on display in its showroom on Kabar Aye Pagoda Road. Next month another Toyota showroom is set to open in Yangon, to be run by Toyota's second Myanmar distributor, the Mingalar Motor Company.

Toyota is one brand with significant local awareness. Its cars occupy a prominent position on Myanmar's roads, but the challenge the company faces is transitioning from being the leading used car brand to being a popular new car company as well.

Show may be over for local-language video rental shops

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MA Hnin Hnin Khain is like many cinephiles in that she formerly visited her local video rental shop every day to borrow a movie for the evening's viewing.

But improved television shows, particularly Channel 7's Korean movies, mean Ma Hnin Hnin Khain finds she has begun spending less of her income at the local rental shop.

The drop in customers is being keenly felt by video rental shops, which purchase films and then rent them out for one night at a cost of K200 or K300 a piece. Though mainstays for connoisseurs of local cinema, their days may be numbered as television and Korean dramas take

'Some people in the suburbs still watch Myanmar films, but viewers are increasingly turning to television.'

Sat Wai rental shop owner

hold, and cheap pirated foreign films are readily available.

It's tough to keep customers interested in locally made movies, when foreign productions with larger budgets and international stars fill

up the nightly television screen, said the owner of Sat Wai movie rental shop in Thingyangyun township.

"Some people in the suburbs still watch Myanmar films, but viewers are increasingly turning to television, not renting videos," said the owner. "There are only a few people left renting movies."

The owner said she had opened her shop years ago because her house was centrally located, and films were a hot commodity.

But technology has caught up, and cheap foreign films are increasingly undercutting the Myanmar movie rental business, said the owner of Grand rental shop in North Okkalapa.

"We've been open for 12 years and it's the main business for my family - and it's declined by half," the owner said. "We'll have to find another business to survive."

Myanmar productions are heavily local, with different areas latching on to different actors and actresses, said U Khin Htay from Zabutalu production. Some actors are popular in rural areas, while other actresses are big in the cities.

Still, the price-sensitive rural areas have almost entirely abandoned legitimate films, forcing the firm to increasingly depend on Mandalay and Yangon for revenue.

U Khin Htay said a strong law on copyright and an improved distribution system are important to developing the local film industry, but domestic studios must also improve their product.

Although cheap, mass-produced foreign films are commonly pirated



Video rental shops are a tough proposition in most markets around the world these days. Photo: Naing Win Tun

and sold, Myanmar films are somewhat less susceptible as they must also be pirated locally. However, some shops do pirate local movies on a small-scale level.

The local aspect to Myanmar films is the lifeline for the industry. U Win Min Aung is like many who remain renters - he watches Myanmar movies because he has an easier time un-

derstanding the culture and figuring out if the film will be worthwhile.

"I like Myanmar movies because it's easier for me to tell if they're going to be good or not," he said.

Other would-be renters say it's tough to find films in the downtown area. Most youth have switched to foreign films, said Ma Suthandar, who lives in Tarmwe township.

Rental shop owners say there is little they can do to prevent the slide. The owner of Sat Wai rental shop said she tries to adjust her stock to generate more custom. Lately she has been buying more funny movies and less action and ghost movies.

"If the actor is not famous and new, people don't want to watch the film," she said.

IN BRIEF

Two more airlines cleared for take-off by investment body

The Myanmar Investment Commission has approved two locally-owned airlines to begin operating local and international routes.

Apex airline, run by Apex Airline Public Company, and FMI Air, owned by Serge Pun and Associates, were approved in the third week of October, in time for the start of tourist season.

FMI Air formerly operated as a charter service but is to transition to a regularly scheduled service. It has conducted flights on the Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon route. Apex airline is spear-headed by a consortium of business-people and is still preparing to start operations. – Sandar Lwin

Fisheries survey gets under way

South Korea will provide US\$25,000 to fund research into Myanmar's fisheries sector in the hope of making its products more competitive on the international market and encouraging South Korean companies to invest in the sector.

The Korea Maritime and Ocean University has teamed up with the Myanmar Marine University to study the sector, with the first half of the funds distributed in September.

The survey is due to be completed in December, with a research team from a South Korean think-tank to conduct an assessment of the sector for potential foreign investment.

– Shwegu Thitsar,
translation by Thiri Min Htun

Refineries needed to aid energy independence

The Ministry of Energy ought to support high-tech oil refineries to help meet domestic fuel demand, said Major Than Tun Myint, a military representative at the Amyotha Hluttaw, on October 29.

Current domestic petroleum production must often be exported to be refined. "If we produce high-tech fuels, we can reduce the trade deficit," he said. The current financial year's trade deficit has already exceeded last year's US\$2.65 billion trade deficit.

The Ministry of Energy has a tender to improve the refinery in Yangon Region's Thanlyin township through a foreign partnership. It also has plans for further refinery capacity, said deputy energy minister U Aung Htoo.

– Pyae Thet Phyto,
translation by Zar Zar Soe

Illegal trade targeted in Mandalay

Mandalay area authorities will launch a program targeting illegal trade at Mandalay International Airport and jet-ties along the Ayeyarwady river in a bid to cut down on smuggling.

The program will last for the month of November, and will see authorities seize goods being traded without licences and taxed at applicable rates. If the taxes are paid, the goods will be returned rather than confiscated, as the program aims to be educational, said U Thein Win, director at Mandalay's Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.

"Our aim is to generate tax revenue for the country and ensure traders conduct trade the right way," he said.

– Than Naing Soe,
translation by Thae Thae Htwe

Mandalay rice company planned

Several prominent Mandalay rice traders are banding together to start a rice exporting company to seek legal opportunities to trade with China.

The firm aims to represent all the rice associations, such as millers and brokers, in the city, though the board of directors will be composed entirely of rice traders, said U Min Htet Aung, secretary of the Mandalay Wholesale Commodity Exchange Centre.

"We can't easily gain access to export rice legally to China through existing associations, so we are preparing to found a company," he said.

– Than Naing Soe,
translation by Zar Zar Soe

Four-fifths of registered bikes are brought in illegally



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pyaethetphyto87@gmail.com

FAR more motorcycles are imported to Myanmar illegally than are brought in legally, said deputy railway and transportation minister U Chan Maung.

Of the 4.053 million motorcycles presently registered in Myanmar, some 768,605 – or 19 percent – were made in the industrial zones or were brought in from abroad with official import licences, while the remaining

MILLION
4.05

Number of motorcycles registered with the transportation authorities



A Mandalay city motorbike salesperson makes a deal. Photo: Phyto Wai Kyaw

3.285 million are illegally imported, he said during a session of the Amyotha Hluttaw on October 27.

"Our figures show far fewer vehicles are being officially imported than the number of illegal imports," he said.

The number of illegally imported motorcycles may be higher still as many are thought not to have registered for licence plates.

Government authorities have conducted registrations of illegally imported motorcycles, meaning

people are not concerned they are buying illegally imported vehicles as they can get licences through the frequent amnesties, he said.

"It falls afoul of the import and exports laws," he said. "It's like exhorting people to break the law."

U Chan Maung said most recently 451,608 illegal motorcycles were registered during an amnesty program lasting from February 17 to July 4 of this year, adding there will be no more such amnesty programs. In the future the government will attempt to encourage purchases from official sources, he said.

"Buying motorcycles from showrooms is law-abiding and more suitable for Myanmar. In most international companies, motorcycles are imported legally and people buy them at showrooms," he said.

Illegally imported vehicles in the future will be forced to pay fines, which if not paid could result in the vehicles being confiscated, he claimed.

There are hundreds of different brands of motorbikes available in Myanmar, most of which are imported from China.

– Translation by Thiri Min Htun

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Penalties on the rise for tax dodgers



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PENALTIES on tax dodgers will be raised this year as the government attempts to maximise state revenues in the face of mounting spending projects, said minister of finance U Win Shein.

Current government revenues are not enough to meet the national budget, forcing use of foreign aid, grants and loans to develop projects, he said at a forum of businesspeople on October 28.

The deficit may be a temporary measure to support projects, but must be overcome eventually.

"Over the long term, every government has to pay off its debt," he said.

Myanmar has one of the lowest tax-to-GDP ratios amount Southeast Asian countries, aiming for 9 percent for the 2014-15 fiscal year, from 3.6pc in 2011-12. Bangladesh by comparison has a rate of about 10pc.

Pledges to crack down on tax avoiders have not drawn universal support, with some businesspeople saying paying tax will affect their bottom line. Meanwhile the taxation bureaucracy still has limited technical ability and a lack of skill, and negotiations are com-

mon between taxpayers and government officials who are to check audits.

New rules introduced for the current fiscal year stipulate taxpayers must pay 10pc fines for failing to file or filing late, and a 50pc fine for failure to pay taxes on purpose, along with other fines for a variety of prohibited tax activities.

Internal Revenue Department director Daw Mya Mya Oo said all taxpayers will receive the same kind of treatment. "It will be a disappointment if we can't punish all tax avoiders fairly," she said.

The department releases a list of the top 500 annual taxpayers each year, which often does not include several notable larger companies, a point frequently noted in commentary in local media. However, Internal Revenue Department director general U Min Htut said several of the large taxpayers had simply filed too late to be included in the published list.

"We have faced negative comments claiming we did not urge big companies to pay tax, but we found they did become involved [in paying tax]," he said.

The department has opened a Large Taxpayer Office for about 500 large firms, including *The Myanmar Times*' publisher Myanmar Consolidated Media, allowing them to self-assess taxes instead of requiring visits by auditors. These 500 firms together contributed

more than 50pc of total tax revenues last year.

U Ko Ko Htwe, chair of large construction company Taw Win Family, said it is wise to incentivise firms to pay taxes instead of simply levying penalties, as there is a deeply ingrained habit of avoiding taxes in the business community.

"Habits are unlikely to change in a day," he said. "It's a large tradition to avoid taxes, even for officials, and changing minds will take time." The Internal Revenue Department also needs to reform its human resources, will auditing firms also needs more experts.

Myanmar firms often keep multiple sets of books for different purposes, such as showing auditors, partners or internal use.

"If the government doesn't like corruption, it can take action on staff who accept bribes, but the situation is reversed for taxpayers. They need to give an incentive to taxpayers by reducing rates," said U Ko Ko Htwe.

Not all companies included in the list of large taxpayers said they are aware of the benefits of the new system.

A director at A1 Construction said there is little knowledge of what it means to be included on the list.

"I feel it's just an abstract dignity. We don't get any benefit or any guarantee. It doesn't make it easier to borrow from the banks or anything like that," the director said.

Kokang region adds a border gate

THE Kokang autonomous government plans to open a new border gate in the region that will act as a subsidiary gate to the major Chinshwehaw crossing, said autonomous government secretary U Kyaw Swe.

Located in northeast Shan State on the border with China's Yunnan province, the existing Chinshwehaw crossing is often overloaded during peak hours.

"We need another gate because Chinshwehaw is so busy during the

harvest season, causing serious delays and losses for exports of seasonal crops," he said. The autonomous government has submitted a proposal to Shan State for the second gate, hoping to receive approval by the coming sugarcane harvest. Sugarcane in particular deteriorates rapidly in quality less than a week after harvest, requiring its speedy cross-border transport.

The proposed subsidiary gate is located "within shouting distance" of the main Chinshwehaw gate. The project

also involves a ring road around the town to alleviate needs of transporting goods through the middle of town.

The Kokang area depends on sugarcane, rubber, maize and green tea production. Ministry of Commerce data shows Chinshwehaw is the third-largest of the five border gates with China by trade volumes. Exports through the gates include maize, rice and beans, while imports include fertiliser and construction materials. – *Sandar Lwin*

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Pacific countries top survey

SMALL and well-run Singapore, New Zealand and Hong Kong are the world's easiest places to run a business, while global giants China, Brazil and India remain far down the list, according to the World Bank.

Three small but hot Pacific economies led the Bank's annual "Doing Business" report, released on October 31, which focuses on where businesses are best helped and least hindered by government.

The top 10 was filled out by Denmark, South Korea, Norway, the United States, Britain, Finland and Australia, mostly the same developed economies as in previous years.

But the report, despite revisions to its methodology after upsetting China in past years, left emerging market giants far down the list, fast growth and success in drawing investment notwithstanding.

China ranked 90th out of 189 countries and territories, barely improved from 93 a year ago; Brazil is 120th, also up three places; and India was ranked at 142, two spots worse than before.

All three ranked lower than troubled economies and difficult investment environments like Russia and Greece. But that only underscored the admittedly narrow focus of the survey, in terms of assessing a country's success.

"Doing Business" measures a slender segment of the complex organism that any modern economy is," admitted World Bank chief economist Kaushik Basu in a forward to the report. "An economy can do poorly on 'Doing Business' indicators but do well in macroeconomic policy or social welfare interventions."

The scores measure the operating environment for a business, including how easy it is to start a company, to transfer a property or resolve a commercial dispute; the time and cost of clearing imports and exports through a port; how easy it is to get an electricity connection; and other issues that face business owners in any country.

By those measures, Singapore was, as in recent past years, on top with a score of 88.27, and New Zealand close behind with 86.91.

The top 30 countries all had more than 74 points, while the bottom five, with isolated and authoritarian East African pariah Eritrea at the very end, all scored below 40.

The contrast between the best and worst underscored why Singapore is highly praised and successful. Entrepreneurs in the Southeast Asian island nation need just 2.5

days to open a business, 31 days to get electric power and four days and US\$440 to import a container.

Meanwhile in Eritrea, a similar businessman would need on average 84 days to start a company and 59 days to get electricity, while importing goods takes 59 days and \$2000 per container.

Mr Basu stressed that the survey is not a measure of the level of government intervention in an economy.

"A significant number of the top 30 economies in the ease of doing business ranking come from a tradition where government has had quite a prominent presence in the economy," he noted.

"The top-performing economies ... are therefore not those with no regulation but those in which governments have managed to create rules that facilitate interactions in the marketplace without needlessly hindering the development of the private sector."

"Ultimately, 'Doing Business' is about smart regulations that only a well-functioning state can provide."

"The secret of success is to have the essential rules and regulations in place - but more importantly to have a good system of clearing decisions quickly and predictably, so that small and ordinary businesses do not feel harassed." - AFP

Doing business in Myanmar not too easy

MYANMAR narrowly escaped being named as one of the top 10 most difficult places to do business, coming in 177th spot on the 189-country list released by the World Bank on October 29.

It is the lowest-ranked ASEAN member in the "Doing Business" 2015 report, and with the exception of Afghanistan, the lowest-ranked Asian country.

Myanmar scored last in the "starting a business" category, but did relatively well in the "paying taxes" and "trading across borders" categories, finishing 116th and 103rd respectively. Myanmar was singled out as the country showing the most improvement for trading across borders in the report.

"Its Ministry of Commerce abolished the export licence requirement for 166 types of goods and the import licence requirement for 152 - reducing the time, cost and number of documents required to export and import general cargo products," it said.

"As measured by Doing Business, exporting now takes 20 percent less time than before, and importing 19pc less time." - Jeremy Mullins

IN BRIEF

ConocoPhillips decides Bangladesh blocks not viable

US energy giant ConocoPhillips has decided to stop exploring for oil and gas in Bangladesh's two deep-sea blocks after deciding it was not commercially viable.

Bangladesh awarded the US company rights to explore in blocks 10 and 11 in the energy-rich Bay of Bengal in 2011 after Myanmar found a huge gas reserve in nearby waters.

But after conducting two surveys, ConocoPhillips has told Bangladesh's state energy group PetroBangla it will not continue exploring, the country's junior energy minister Nasrul Hamid said. - AFP

Apple chief comes out as gay

Apple's Tim Cook became the most prominent chief executive to acknowledge his homosexuality, putting fresh focus on gay representation in the boardroom.

"Let me be clear: I'm proud to be gay, and I consider being gay among the greatest gifts God has given me," Mr Cook said.

Mr Cook's announcement, in an essay written for *Bloomberg Businessweek*, is a watershed since he is the first CEO of a major US corporation to make such a declaration.

- Bloomberg

India mulls mining permit auction

India may auction permits to mine iron ore, bauxite and some other minerals, mirroring a policy for coal after the nation's top court ordered scrapping of arbitrary allocations, people familiar with the plan said.

A bill to amend the Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act of 1957 shall be placed in the next parliament session starting November 24, said the two people, who asked not to be identified pending an announcement. Officials led by Mines and Steel Minister Narendra Singh Tomar are meeting state governments to seek support, they said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who strode to power in May with the biggest mandate in 30 years, is overhauling rules to cut graft and spread the benefit of the nation's resources to all its 1.2 billion people.

- Bloomberg

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OPINION

Learning microfinance's lessons

Sri Lanka and Bangladesh offer two very different models for Myanmar's burgeoning microfinance scene – but which of them is best?

DULAN DE SILVA
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MICROFINANCE is new to Myanmar except for a very few programs over the past 15 years or so. The country is still finding its way with regard to policies and approaches. The Myanmar government, donors and practitioners can learn from countries where modern microfinance has matured and was in existence from the 1970s and 1980s. In this article, the author discusses the lessons Myanmar can learn from the experiences and approaches of Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. We can see government actions affect the poor in their efforts to access small capital.

The issue is one whether the future will ensure pro-poor (good) micro finance or commercial high interest pro-profit microfinance.

Sri Lanka has a long historical relationship with Myanmar with a similar culture and the majority of the population of both countries being Buddhists. Bangladesh on the other hand is a new country sharing a border with Myanmar and consequently enduring tensions. Bangladesh is credited as the country which initiated modern microfinance due to Muhammad Yunus' initial experiments in the early 1970s. Sri Lanka started modern microfinance in the mid 1980s, primarily learning from the program in Bangladesh.

Incidentally, Myanmar's oldest and major microfinance program PACT, which assists over 700,000 families, was initiated and is still headed by a Bangladeshi professional.

In both Bangladesh and Sri Lanka microfinance was pioneered by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with no profit motive, solely with the objective of poverty alleviation and women's empowerment. In the last 20 years, however, there has been a significant change in objectives and approach to microfinance in the two countries. In both Bangladesh and Sri Lanka large amounts of grant money were given by donors to NGOs to commence and expand micro finance work. Further, the World Bank and ADB commenced wholesale funding agencies in both

countries to on-lend to NGOs who in turn retailed to borrowers. In Bangladesh the wholesale body is called PKSF and in Sri Lanka, NDTF.

Major similarities, however, end there. In Bangladesh there is legislation for microfinance whilst in Sri Lanka there is no legislation despite the industry being nearly 30 years old. In Bangladesh the wholesale organisation PKSF has had 24 years of continuous service and as of December 2013 funded 273 NGOs and had an outstanding loan balance of US\$460 million. In Sri Lanka the equivalent organization NDTF was closed down in 2011 and the funds transferred to banks. This action dried the main funding source for NGOs and virtually killed funding for the NGO microfinance sector as they are not permitted to accept savings due to lack of regulations. They are also not permitted to take foreign loans.

The policies of Bangladesh encouraged pro-poor NGO driven microfinance whilst in Sri Lanka once NDTF ceased to exist, the growth in the commercial microfinance sector, driven by Finance Companies and Banks. Finance Companies charge 28 percent flat interest rates (around 56pc declining) for microfinance and one company reported a profit of 490 million Sri Lankan rupees (US\$3.76 million) in 2013. Compared to this, NGOs charge around 12 to 14pc flat, as they are

not profit-driven, and their objective is not to make profits from the poor. Of course, this does not mean that NGOs are not financially sustainable or not making reasonable profits. All major Bangladeshi MFI like ASA, Grameen, BRAC and good Sri Lankan NGO MFIs like Berendina (BMI), which is headed by the writer, make significant profits and use these to give further loans to the poor and not to give dividends to the rich. In this case profit is a measurement of efficiency rather one of greed. One important lesson for donors is not to rush into stopping grants for microfinance without putting in place an alternative mechanism for funding. Even PACT has succeeded due to availability of grant funds. If the switch is made a PKSF equivalent independent national body must be made for on-lending.

Another difference between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh is the role of government-implemented microfinance programs. In Sri Lanka the largest microfinance program is the government managed Samurdhi which has over 700,000 clients. This is subsidised by the treasury with over 1 billion rupees per year and provides loans at very subsidised interest rates. In Bangladesh, too, government started such programs but realised their folly and created an environment for NGOs to be the main provider of microfinance. Myanmar is also starting government-man-

aged micro finance programs. This is partly for political reasons, but is it fair on the poor and the economy? Hence an important lesson from the two countries is that government's role should be facilitation and not direct retailing or wholesaling of credit.

Further, a more hands-off approach with minimum interference create an enabling environment. However the Myanmar government is right in putting an interest cap but should also be wary of numerous charges some MFIs introduce making effective interest rates much higher than what is allowed.

There are various other arguments brought to suggest that microfinance must be commercialised and not left to the NGO sector. One such argument is that commercial actors are more competent in managing savings. However NGOs in Bangladesh which now hold over US\$3 billion in savings with them have proven that this is a myth.

Dulan de Silva is a freelance consultant in microfinance who has worked in over 15 countries including Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

He has spent most of his adult life trying to help eradicate poverty, and appealing to the government and donors to take these lessons into consideration when making decisions about the future of microfinance in Myanmar.

The Myanmar government, donors and practitioners can learn from countries where modern microfinance has matured.



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Property

BUSINESS EDITOR: Jeremy Mullins | jeremymullins7@gmail.com

Fines and seizures coming to industrial land with no progress

PYAE THET PHYU

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UNDEVELOPED land on industrial zones will subject to fines and possible confiscation by the Ministry of Industry in a bid to combat widespread property speculation, according to deputy industry minister U Thein Aung.

Industrial zones have been the site of rampant property speculation, with investors buying and holding land in hopes of it appreciating in value.

The resulting price increases and restricted supply makes it difficult to find reasonably price land for businesspeople attempting to build an actual factory.

"We are planning to fine owners who fail to complete their projects in the proposed period," said U Thein Aung.

"We will also revoke land-use permits for land where investors haven't presented a project proposal," he added.

It can also be difficult to revoke permits that provide rights to industrial zone land plots, however, as it needs to be done gently and fairly. Still, it is a job that needs to

be done, said U Thein Aung.

"Vacant land is useless for the country," he said. "We need to create job opportunities and eliminate poverty."

Land has often been purchased by businesspeople with plans for a project, but then resold to speculators when they offered higher prices. U Thein Aung said there are now nine teams actively checking up on vacant land in industrial zones, though it can be difficult to determine whether the land is vacant due to being owned by speculators or vacant for another reason.

U Thein Aung's comments came in the Amyotha Hluttaw on October 15 in response to a question from Yangon Region representative U Myat Nyarna Soe, who said high land prices are making it difficult for foreign investors to choose Myanmar to set up their facilities.

U Myat Nyarna Soe said he had visited Hlaing Tharyar industrial zone and received complaints from businesspeople whose face growing rental prices stemming from speculators bidding up purchasing prices.

"Foreign investors don't want to do business with expensive rental prices, so the development of the country's economy is being obstructed by soaring land prices even though Myanmar has rich human and natural resources," he said.

There are currently 19 developed industrial zones, six more zones under development, 24 sub-industrial zones and three special economic zones - Thilawa, Dawei and Kyaukphyu. The three SEZs in particular are geared toward attracting significant foreign business, and offer companies a number of benefits by locating on the zones.

- Translation by Thiri Min Htun

'We will also revoke land-use permits for land where investors haven't presented a project proposal.'

U Thein Aung
Deputy industry minister



IN PICTURES

Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

The Myanmar city of Muse (foreground) ends and the Chinese city of Ruili begins. The border is approximately at the tree line.

Property price rise puts pressure on pre-sales



MYAT
NYEIN AYE

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SURGING property prices are making it more difficult for buyers to pay for units with one-time purchases, and buyers are increasingly turning to pre-sales that allow installment payments.

Pre-sales were virtually unheard of before 2011 in Yangon, but after land prices took off, local contractors have begun turning to the practice to make their developments affordable, said U San Yu, who is a manager at construction sites.

"Contractors were suddenly faced with real difficulty in funding projects, so they began doing deals with land owners and started using a pre-sale system," said U San Yu.

Pre-sales work in a number of ways. The most common is that a buyer places a down payment on a unit, typically around a quarter or a third of the whole amount, and then pays the rest in installments as the building is actually built.

The system is not without controversy, however. Some contractors accept down payments and then are slow to start actually building, often leaving the buyers with little recourse but to sit, wait and hope the project actually gets built. Customers need to make sure they are buying from licensed contractors, said U San Yu.

YCDC also launched a crackdown on unlicensed contractors last year,

taking particular aim at builders in Yangon's outskirts who operated without the correct permits and licences.

Thingangyun township has gained a reputation for being an area with many buildings going up without licences. One local contractor requesting anonymity said sometimes the real estate sector is a way to turn so-called "black", or questionably obtained, money into clean "white" money.

"These kind of contractors do not use licences, and they often offer pre-sale apartments at cheaper prices," he said.

It is cheaper to put up buildings without the expenses of receiving YCDC approval, though this also encourages shady property dealings, he said. In particular, it can take up to three months to get a building licence for freehold land and up to a year to get a licence for grant land.

Fees can also add up, according to U San Yu. "It costs so much in fees to finish a building." For instance, renewing a contractor licence is between K20 million and K50 million, depending on size of the building they are allowed to build. There's also a K3 million deposit per building, a K3 million fire protection fee to the Department of Fire Service, as well as the cost of the project itself.

Buyers also often seek out unlicensed units in a bid to find lower prices, said U Yan Aung, general manager of Asia Construction Company.

Some contractors have many projects, and use pre-sale revenue from one project to fund a separate project, meaning it can take a long time before some projects are completed.

Buyers must be sure to have a

firm, written contract completed by a lawyer before buying a pre-sale unit. Some contractors insist on making the contracts themselves, so they are covered when something goes wrong.

The root reason for contractors pre-selling is that property development has a large, up-front cost. Often contractors pay the land owner in kind with finished units instead of by cash, and many also see presales as a way to raise much-needed capital.

Edwin Vanderbruggen, senior partner at legal firm VDB Loi, said if construction firms are conducting pre-sales, they should show irrefutable proof to customers that the building will proceed, such as disclosing the capital it has for construction.

"If the contractors don't do that, the buyers don't have to believe them until construction is finished on all the units," he said.

Mr Vanderbruggen added the Yangon City Development Committee and Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development have added new laws on buildings, which are better than previous rules. However, the regulations could still be improved.

In other countries, apartment owners are able to get a copy of the builder's licence to accompany the contract when applying for a bank loan, though there is no such system here, he said.

Although experts warn buyers to be cautious, not every buyer of a pre-sale unit experiences trouble.

Ko Nyan Linn bought a pre-sale apartment which will cost him a total of about K18 million.

"I go and see the construction site almost every day to see whether my unit is finished," he said. "I am not rich."

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“We told them our desires but they rejected them, so we have chosen Yongnam instead.”

— Directorate of Civil Aviation official U Win Swe Htun on the decision to ditch Incheon to build Hanthawaddy

First lawsuit filed in MH370 tragedy

WORLD 42

Building better real estate laws

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FOSTERING growth in the property market will require an improved legal climate, likely including more participation by the Myanmar Investment Commission, according to Edwin Vanderbruggen, senior partner at legal and tax advisers VDB Loi.

Most sectors in the economic are seeing significant growth, and property is no different, though it comes with its own set of challenges.

“The recent property laws and regulations are not bad but they need to be firm and [could] be better,” he said.

Less than 5 percent of large-scale property projects have obtained a Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) permit, which is partly due to the commission’s policies requiring developers to have an actual lease and partly due to applicants being unable or unwilling

to take on MIC scrutiny, he said.

MIC permits are required for most large foreign investment such as manufacturing, but not for property. “Mandatory or not, developers should in our view be more open to submitting their project to the MIC for approval and support,” he said at a conference jointly organised by local business chamber UMFCCI and VDB Loi on October 24.

Increased MIC involvement in the real estate sector could be positive in certain instances, such as if leased land needs to be subdivided and sub-leased. Some government land owners are reluctant to modify lease terms, but MIC could play a role by helping investors and the government develop structures that are suitable for raising funds.

Financing developments is also still at an early stage in the country, he said. Most foreign-invested projects are financed by a combination of equity, shareholder loans and proceeds from unit sales, while project financing from overseas is still quite rare. Although the 2012 Foreign Exchange Management Act improved the situation, the Central Bank of Myanmar and the MIC are not yet familiar with the needs and expectations of foreign lenders.

Richard Emerson, country manager of Savills real estate firm, said Myanmar has a good property market, though investment is less than experts’ hopes because of the high property prices and weakness of property rules and regulations.



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

The Golden Valley housing game



House of the Week has a few regrets. Never getting good at bowling, for instance, or not pursuing youthful dreams of raising professional fighting cocks. But no decision stings more dearly than the decision not to get involved in the Golden Valley property game half a decade ago.

It’s a great area to live in Yangon, but the secret’s out, and it’s not cheap. Those that bought in a half-decade ago generally have a good thing going, but it’s a tough market for your average renters like *House of the Week*.

That’s why we were pleased as punch to find this week’s house. It’s smack in the middle of Golden Valley, and the asking price is a good starting point at K3.5 million a month to rent. Given that it could

be negotiated lower, it’s the start of something of a deal.

The 2400-square-foot, two-storey home has two master bedrooms, two smaller bedrooms and a couple of living rooms. There is also plenty of outdoor space, though it could use a gardener’s attention, while indoors is well-decorated with tasteful parquet floors.

It’s also a short walk from Yan Gyi Aung Pagoda, which, depending on your religious leanings, is a convenient stop to express your faith. Downtown is also a short trip away, making it a convenient commute for those working in the city.

The full list of amenities are here, but the home isn’t fully furnished and will need an assortment of furniture. And now that the Golden Valley housing issue might be solved for *House of the Week*, at least on a rental basis, maybe it’s time to look into those fighting cocks.

– Tin Yadanar Htun

Location	: Old University Avenue Road, Golden Valley, Bahan township
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NEW DELHI MUMBAI

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Dated: 3rd November, 2014

Got something to say?
The Myanmar Times



newsroom@mmtimes.com

Science & Technology

Ooredoo near to covering all of Yangon

CATHERINE TRAUTWEIN
newsroom@mmtimes.com

OOREDOO'S coverage now extends to 95 percent of Yangon city, Ooredoo Myanmar CEO Ross Cormack announced at a press conference on October 29.

Though a few trouble spots still exist, the company has been working to augment coverage by putting up roof-tops and towers, Mr Cormack said.

"We have still work to do in Parami Road on the northeast side of Inya Lake, where you come from Parami round the corner, and in Thaketa, and also on the south side of Shwedagon Pagoda," he continued. "But those are single locations which we'll be able to cover in the next few weeks."

Of Yangon Region's 44 townships, 39 are blanketed by Ooredoo's coverage and 25 "are more than 80 percent covered ... area-wise", Mr Cormack said.

Meanwhile in Bago Region, the telco's coverage stretches to 15 of 28 townships, with four blanketed 80pc or more by area, he added.

The company also claims "continuous 3G coverage" on the highway to Mandalay, in which division 17 out of 28 townships are covered and 12 have 80pc or more of their areas covered.

"If you chose to get in your car and drive from [Yangon] to Nay Pyi Taw and then all the way up the highway to Mandalay, you have continuous 3G coverage apart from a tiny gap," Mr Cormack said. "This is a first in Myanmar."

Ooredoo will fill the last coverage gap on the highway with two base stations in Myit Son Gyi village, Kyaukse township, Mandalay Region, by the end of the year.

Spark of knowledge



CATHERINE TRAUTWEIN

newsroom@mmtimes.com

THE people actively building Wikipedia's Myanmar language site have a joke. Each time a celebrity dies, a Myanmar Wikipedia page is born.

That's because when a famous person passes on, news sources publish stories about them, which serves as ready-made references for the Myanmar Wikipedia community of editors. "Sometimes it's very hard to collect the information about the biography," says Ko Zaw Thet Aung, a community administrator. "[When] some celebrity dies, their biography's in the newspaper."

Wikipedia relies on a community of volunteers to write and edit encyclopedia articles online. The website, run by non-profit organisation Wikimedia Foundation, was founded as an English-language page, but now covers more than 33 million pages in upward of 287 languages around the world - including Myanmar. A dedicated community of Myanmar editors, whose core group of frequent contributors numbers about 10 to 20 people, has helped build up a vault of more than 33,000 Myanmar language articles.

For the small group of volunteers building the Myanmar-language Wikipedia presence, content begets content. Editors can take everything from current events to books on niche topics and turn them into native language articles. Subjects aren't assigned, but crop up naturally from interest. Popular topics, on subjects as varied as geography, famous figures and the mysterious disappearance of MH370.

Wikipedia contributor Ko Maung San has seen the site come a long way from the blacklist, where it briefly ended up "once or twice when the political situation was not very good ... like 2007, 2008", he said.

Still, there's plenty more information that has not yet found its way into the Myanmar version of the digital encyclopedia. Advocates hope to augment the expansion of Myanmar Wikipedia, which according to Wikipedia Statistics has 3 percent more articles now than it did last year and sees 2 new articles go up a day.

As Anna Koval, manager of the Wikipedia Education Program at the Wikimedia Foundation, said at Ooredoo's Yangon Connected Women's Conference on October 17, the site has room to grow. And though 33,549 articles might seem like a small number compared to the nearly 4.7 million pages in English, passionate people are making progress.

"It only takes one match to burn down a forest and one tree can make a million matches," she said, speaking about raising awareness for Wikipedia.

Though a crowd of loosely organised contributors has created this information stockpile mostly on its own steam, it has also had help most recently from Telenor, the Norwegian telco which launched services in Yangon on October 26.

If a contributor's aim is to help make Wikipedia a one-stop shop for information, Telenor is working toward bringing people in. In 2012 the firm partnered with the Wikimedia Foundation on Wikipedia Zero, the initiative to deliver mobile users free access to the site. The company also helps to put on local trainings and events.

Telenor's initiatives could help spur the responsible content generation - article-writing with a

Celebrate the launch of new mobile services in Myanmar this November

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idge starts with Wikipedia

conscience – which Wikipedia also emphasises through its values. At a recent training at Yangon's Strategy First Institute, the Wikimedia Foundation's director of global partnerships Carolynne Schloeder became emotional when speaking about the Wikipedians reasons for dedicated editing.

"You're going to get tears in my eyes," she said. "First of all they believe that knowledge is a basic right and everybody should have access ... I hope ... what we're seeing is pride also in Myanmar culture, Myanmar-specific knowledge and how to share that with the world."

MILLION
33
Total number of Wikipedia pages across 287 different languages

Contributors interact with Wikipedia within the structure of its five pillars: that Wikipedia is an encyclopedia; that is must be written without bias; that its content is free and for anyone to use, edit and distribute; that editors must be civil and respectful to each other; and that no rules are set in stone, the tenets' Wikipedia page said.

Ko Zaw Thet Aung, the only active administrator of Myanmar Wikipedia's

four admins, with nearly a decade on the site under his belt, said he has only one power that normal contributors don't: he can delete and "protect" articles, or shield them from edits by new or unregistered users.

Yet he's far from ruling the community with an iron fist. Wikipedia can sometimes become the field of battle for "edit wars", when users change information in articles, especially controversial ones. Ko Zaw Thet Aung said he has seen arguments over the Rakhine conflict and death tolls in Cyclone Nargis.

In cases of contention, Ko Zaw Thet Aung delegates power to the people to hand down judgment.

"I will just protect the pages and then let some experienced users decide what's going on ... I cannot know everything and I'm not a dictator," he said jokingly.

His approach is typical of a self-governing community where administrators don't even assign which articles to write. Instead, contributors head to a discussion page aptly called "the tea shop" to decide for themselves.

In this group, what's "true" can be contested. Through Wikipedia "talk pages", editors have the option of arguing articles' finer points, though both Ko Zaw Thet Aung and Ko Maung San said this behaviour hasn't yet caught on in Myanmar. Work must be based on specific types of reliable sources, which play trump card in arguments.

"Edit wars ... are not very big, because so long as we can show our sources and we can show our references, we can just solve it," Ko Maung San said.

Particular changes expose the agents behind them. Sometimes the term "ethnic armed force" gets rebranded as "rebels" – a sign that military people have contributed to the page, according to Ko Zaw Thet Aung.

Content generation presents a constant challenge for the community. To get fresh contributors, people first need to know what Wikipedia is and, second, need computers. Wikipedia Zero, which facilitates free access to the site via mobile, can help spread information, but only if one major issue facing users gets resolved, according to Ko Maung San.

"We need the next generation to come in," Ko Maung San said. "The barrier is the font problem ... Most people are using the non-standard font, Zawgyi, so they have difficulty viewing Wikipedia because all their devices and computers defer to Zawgyi."

"I think Wikipedia Zero [has a] lot of potential in Myanmar," he said. "I think most of the Myanmar people are English illiterate so they will get more profit from the Myanmar language Wikipedia than English language Wikipedia. But ... to get that knowledge all the mobile phones have to be supported with Unicode."

Ms Schloeder said the Zawgyi versus Unicode problem can be addressed in the interim. It's a move that could bring more people into the Wikipedia fold and increase awareness for the site.

Though 33,549 articles is a start, more people need to provide kindling for information to spread like wildfire in Myanmar.

iSPY

by Myo Satt

Illuminating with a Lighter DVR

Hidden in a Zippo-style light, the controls for this spy camera are on the lighter's bottom. It has a Micro SD card that can hold up to 8GB worth of videos or photos. But don't try lighting your cigarette with it, as it doesn't give a spark.

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– Translation by Thiri Min Htun

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World

WORLD EDITOR: Fiona MacGregor

BRUSSELS

Russia and war-torn Ukraine sign crucial gas deal as winter nears

RUSSIA agreed to resume gas deliveries to war-torn Ukraine through the winter in an EU-brokered, multi-billion-dollar deal signed by the three parties in Brussels on October 30.

In a hard-fought accord the EU hopes will ease the broader crisis over Ukraine, Russia agreed to ensure supplies until the end of March.

"I'm glad that political responsibility, the logic of cooperation and simple economic sense have prevailed," EU Commission chief Jose Manuel Barroso told a press conference.

He hailed the end of a bitter gas dispute that saw Russia cut supplies to Ukraine in June, insisting Kiev pay for deliveries up front.

"There is no reason for people in Europe to be cold this winter," Mr Barroso said, referring to fears that Russia could have turned the Ukraine taps off, disrupting onward supplies to many European Union countries.

Ukraine Energy Minister Yuri Prodan said the "decisions taken today will provide energy security for Ukraine and the EU".

The deal caps two days of marathon talks that had stalled before dawn on October 30 when Russia demanded that the EU first agree with Ukraine how to pay Kiev's outstanding bills and finance gas deliveries through to March.

"The European Commission must reach an agreement with Ukraine over the question of financing," a spokesperson for Russian gas giant Gazprom said in Moscow earlier. "Otherwise, negotiations make no sense."

In Kiev, Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said he would ask the United States and Germany for "additional financial instruments for Ukraine that would help stabilise the budget and pay our energy bills".

EU Energy Commissioner Guenther Oettinger called the deal a "real

breakthrough" that was reached with cool heads against the backdrop of a seven-month war in eastern Ukraine pitting Kiev against pro-Moscow rebels.

"This is perhaps the first sign of a well-working neighbourhood policy. It is a good message," Mr Oettinger said.

He said the terms of the agreement confirmed the tentative outlines of one he reached earlier in the month whereby Ukraine would pay US\$3.1 billion by the end of the year to settle a large portion of its outstanding bills to Russia.

'There is no reason for people in Europe to be cold this winter.'

Jose Manuel Barroso
EU Commission Chief

In return, Russia agreed a base reference price for deliveries through to March 2015 of \$385 per 1000 cubic metres, a discount of about \$100.

In practice, depending on market conditions and the amounts involved, the prices will likely be slightly lower.

The EU gets about a third of its gas from Russia, of which around half transits via Ukraine, a former Soviet bloc country.

The EU was seeking to avoid a repeat of 2006 and 2009 when Russia halted supplies to Ukraine, disrupting deliveries onward to Europe during two very cold winters.

In June, several months after the Ukraine crisis began with the popular overthrow of a pro-Moscow president in Kiev, Russia cut sup-

plies again, demanding that Kiev settle its outstanding bills and pay up front for any future deliveries.

"We are convinced that our future relations will be constructive and our agreements fulfilled," Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said after the deal.

Gazprom spokesperson Sergey Kupriyanov issued a statement saying, "This is hopefully the start of a new, more constructive chapter in gas relations among the EU, Russia and Ukraine."

Despite the optimism, there was no immediate sign the deal would lead to progress on the wider crisis.

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said the US-led alliance remained vigilant after an upsurge in Russian military activity in European airspace earlier this week.

In response, several NATO countries launched a series of intercepts, meant especially to help reassure east European allies unnerved by Russia's intervention in Ukraine.

Ukraine also said pro-Russia rebels killed seven of its soldiers in eastern Ukraine on October 30, the highest toll in two weeks.

The latest killings bring the total military deaths for Ukraine to 160 since a ceasefire was agreed in September, while more than 3700 people have died since the start of fighting in April after Russia annexed Crimea.

The EU has imposed a range of economic sanctions on Russia for its alleged military intervention in Ukraine. Moscow has retaliated with punitive measures of its own.

Member states agreed earlier this week to leave the sanctions in place after a regular review, and on October 29 condemned Moscow's willingness to recognise upcoming elections in rebel-held areas.

The gas deal marks a farewell for Mr Barroso who was stepping down on November 1 to make way for a new commission. — AFP



OUAGADOUGOU

Protesters oust

RIVAL army factions were tussling over the future of the West African state of Burkina Faso last week after deposed President Blaise Compaore reportedly fled the capital Ouagadougou.

Army chief Naverre Honore Traore announced he was assuming power after an extraordinary week of violent protest against Compaore's 27-year rule that saw parliament stormed and set ablaze.

But Mr Traore's bid for control was quickly challenged by a group of young army officers who said they had "taken the destiny of the nation in hand".

Speaking before large crowds in the Place de la Nation, site of some of the week's fiercest clashes, Lieutenant-Colonel Isaac Yacouba Zida, second-in-command of the presidential guard, said a "transitional body" would be established to restore constitutional order.

He appeared alongside lawyer Guy Herve Kam, leader of the Citizen Broom group that helped lead the demonstrations in the poverty-stricken nation.

Mr Zida also ordered the closing of the country's borders as reports suggested the president had fled.

A French diplomatic source told AFP that Mr Compaore was travelling south towards the town of Po near the border with Ghana.

The source said he was still in the country and had not asked for refuge in France, the former colonial power.

The uprising, which has drawn parallels with the Arab Spring, was sparked by plans to change the constitution to allow Mr Compaore to stand once

again for elections next year.

Mr Compaore is one of several sub-Saharan African leaders who have stayed in power for decades, and the protests are being closely watched across the continent where at least four heads of state are pressing for similar constitutional changes to cling to power.

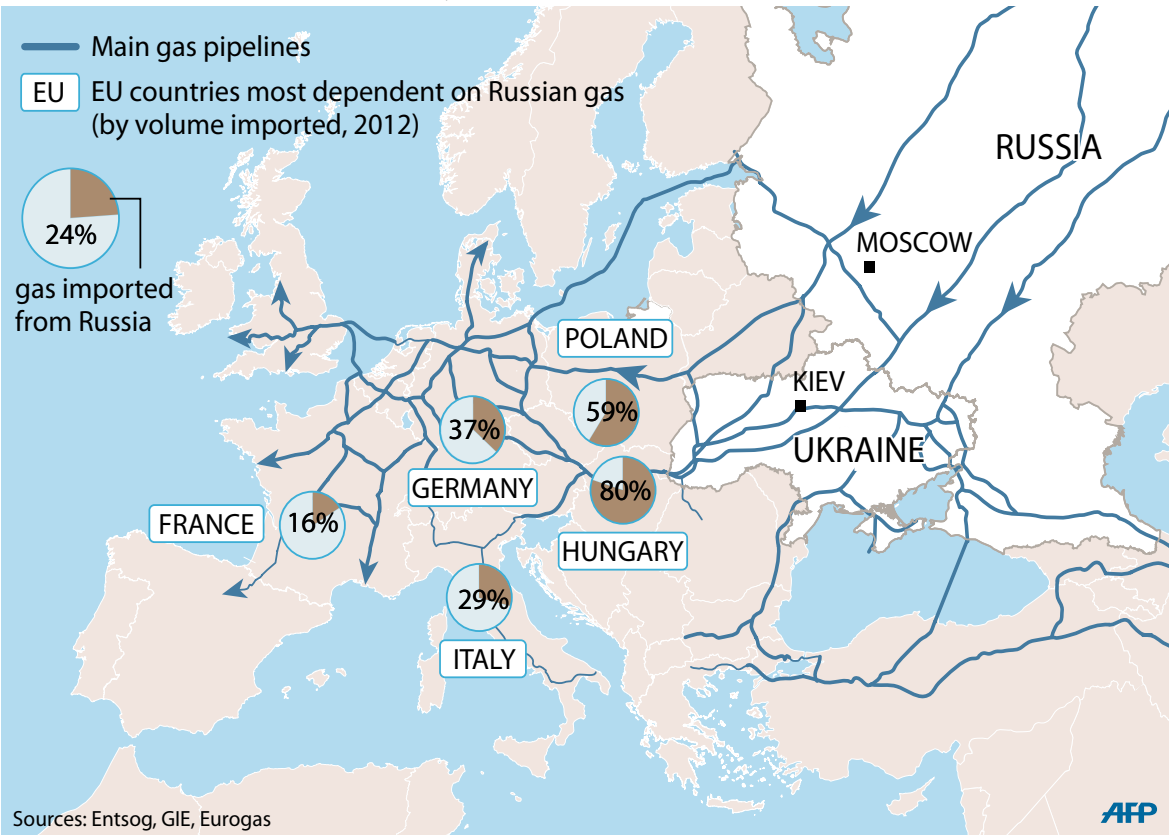
Many protesters are deeply opposed to army chief Traore taking power as he is seen as a close ally of Mr Compaore.

"We do not want General Traore



Protesters pose with a police shield outside

Europe's dependency on Russian gas





Organ-trade fears over Thai-Cambodia kidney operations

WORLD 44

E-waste recycling boom brings illness to Chinese workers

WORLD 45



Afghanistan's Ghani vows long-term links with Beijing

WORLD 49



IN PICTURES

Photo: AFP

Pro-democracy protesters dance with umbrellas in the Mongkok district of Hong Kong on October 28. Activists were marking one month of mass protests, calling on supporters to gather for an evening rally wearing the masks they have used to ward off police tear gas and pepper spray.

Burkina Faso's president

in power. We need someone credible. Traore is Blaise Compaore's henchman," said Monou Tapsoaba, an activist with the opposition People's Movement for Progress.

The army chief announced on October 30 that the government had been dissolved. The army imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew and pledged to restore constitutional order within 12 months in a statement signed by Mr Traore.

One opposition leader, Benewende Sankara, described the

move as a "coup".

Another opposition chief, Zephirin Diabre, told AFP he hoped the two military factions will forge an agreement.

"We await the army's plans for the transition. We will tell them what we think," he said.

Many of the tens of thousands massed on the streets of the capital have called for retired general and former defence minister Kouame Lougue to take control, shouting: "Lougue in power!"

France's President Francois Hollande vowed that Paris would "contribute to calming" the situation in its former colony, while Washington urged "a transfer of power in accordance with the constitution".

The EU called for the people of Burkina Faso to have the final say in who rules their country.

The crisis is the worst in Burkina Faso since a wave of mutinies shook the country in 2011.

Mr Compaore had initially rejected calls to resign. He withdrew plans for a vote on the constitutional changes but vowed to stay in power for another year.

He was only 36 when he seized power in a 1987 coup in which his former friend Thomas Sankara was ousted and assassinated.

His bid to cling to power angered many, particularly young people in a country where 60 per cent of the population of almost 17 million is under 25.

Many have spent their entire lives under the leadership of one man and are disillusioned by the establishment running the poor former French colony, which is stagnating at 183rd out of 186 countries on the UN human development index.

The death toll from the October 30 violence – the peak of the unrest – was given as "around 30" by two opposition leaders.

"October 30 is Burkina Faso's 'Black Spring', like the Arab Spring," Emile Pargui Pare, an official from opposition party the Movement of People for Progress, told AFP.

Known in colonial times as Upper Volta, the landlocked country became independent from France in 1960 and its name was changed to Burkina Faso ("the land of upright men") in 1984. – AFP



the parliament in Ouagadougou on October 30. Photo: AFP

MONROVIA



Health workers stand at an Ebola treatment centre run by the non-governmental international organisation Doctors without Borders in Monrovia, Liberia, on October 27. Photo: AFP

Experts urge caution over claims Ebola is in decline

HEALTH authorities called last week for renewed vigilance over the Ebola epidemic and urged caution over claims the disease is retreating as the World Bank announced a US\$100 million fund for more health workers.

The warning follows an announcement by the World Health Organization (WHO) that data from funeral directors and treatment centres indicated lower admission rates and burials in Liberia, the nation hit hardest by the killer virus.

But international aid agency Doctors Without Borders said the slowdown could be due to sick people not being picked up because of a lack of ambulances and being omitted from the statistics.

The charity, known by its French initials MSF, said "mandatory cremation of dead bodies and a poor ambulance and referral system could also be reasons for this decrease in admissions".

"It is too soon to draw conclusions on the reduction of Ebola cases in Monrovia," Fasil Tezera, MSF head of mission in Liberia, said in a statement.

WHO assistant director-general Bruce Aylward told reporters in Geneva on October 29 that labs were seeing a "plateauing or slight decline" in the number of confirmed cases, but warned that the crisis was far from over.

Liberia welcomed the possibility of a turning-point in the outbreak but echoed the call for caution issued by the WHO and MSF.

Deputy health minister Tolbert Nyensuah said that even if it managed to achieve no new cases, Liberia would not be able to consider itself Ebola-free until neighbours Guinea and Sierra Leone had eradicated the virus.

The outbreak has claimed almost 5000 lives, according to the WHO, almost all in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, while cases registered worldwide have soared to 13,703.

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim announced the \$100-million donation, describing it as a "first down payment", as he visited the UN Mission on Ebola Emergency Response headquarters in Ghana.

"We have to end this epidemic, there's just no other way around it. We've got to get to zero," he said, admitting the world had reacted too slowly and describing the economies of the three worst-hit countries as "devastated".

The outbreak has taken a huge toll on health workers in the region, with 272 deaths, most of them in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Researchers warned traditional

west African funeral rites, including kissing and touching a dead body, had driven the initial spread of Ebola and must be halted.

"To stem Ebola transmission in Liberia, it is imperative to simultaneously restrict traditional burials, which are effectively serving as super-spreader events," a study in the journal *Science* said.

Meanwhile, a British navy ship arrived in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown laden with 350 personnel and equipment to treat victims of the deadly virus.

"We have taken all precautions and understood the situation. Berthing in Freetown today, the mood of the personnel is one of a desire to get started on the job and to see that Ebola is kicked out," said Commander Ross Spooner, from Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose.

Samantha Power, the US ambassador to the UN, said west Africa is showing "the first tangible signs" that Ebola will be beaten, after she completed a tour of the region last week.

But the virus continues to spread fear as far away as east Asia, with China particularly "vulnerable" to an outbreak, according to Ebola co-discoverer Peter Piot, due to soaring economic migration to Africa.

And North Korea announced it intended to quarantine all foreigners entering the country for 21 days, no matter what their country of origin.

In the United States, American nurse Kaci Hickox, who recently returned from Sierra Leone, has vowed to fight an order by the state of Maine to remain at home for the final 12 days of her 21-day quarantine period.

In France, the country's Ebola task force said trials would begin in Guinea later this month on tests that can diagnose Ebola more quickly.

They will include a prototype device, similar to a home pregnancy test, that may make diagnosis possible in under 15 minutes, Jean-Francois Del-fraissy, who spearheads France's Ebola campaign, told journalists in Paris.

While the outbreak is inspiring fear across the world, it is also devastating the response to other deadly diseases at its epicentre.

MSF warned that Ebola had made obtaining treatment for malaria almost impossible in Liberia, with the majority of general wards closed because staff are too afraid to work.

MSF has begun distributing anti-malarials to around 300,000 people in the city's poorest, most densely inhabited neighbourhoods. – AFP

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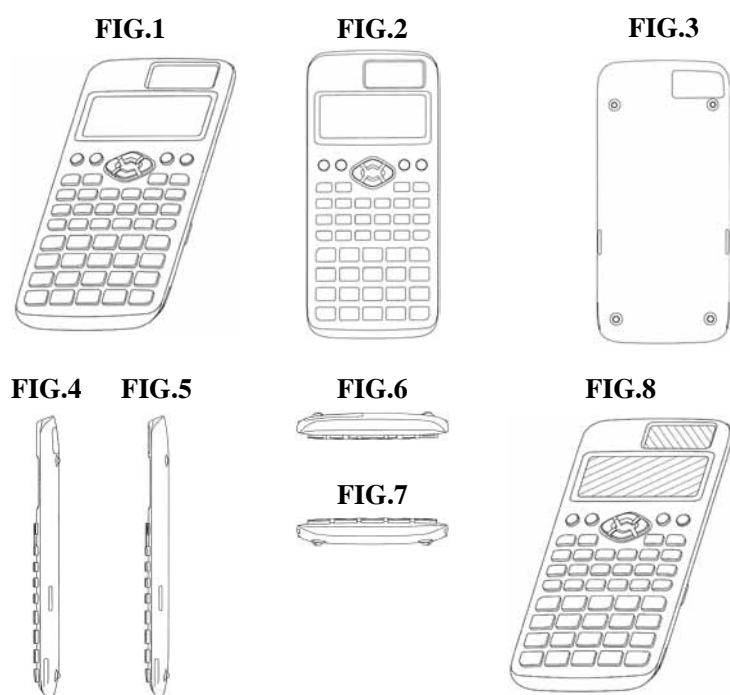
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KUALA LUMPUR

Anwar Ibrahim talks on his mobile phone outside court in Malaysia on October 28: Photo: AFP

Anwar appeal extended as he claims 'fabrication'

OPPOSITION leader Anwar Ibrahim insisted last week he was the victim of a Malaysian government "fabrication and conspiracy" as the country's top court continued to hear his appeal against a sodomy conviction that would send him to jail.

Mr Anwar, who has led a once-hapless opposition to the brink of power, has long asserted the much-criticised proceedings against him are a politically motivated campaign to eliminate him as a threat.

"Based on the facts and law, I see no possibility or no other options except to acquit me of all the frivolous charges," Mr Anwar, 67, told reporters outside the Federal Court chambers where the case is being reviewed.

"Clearly people can see now the evidence of fabrication and the conspiracy on the part of the powers that be."

Sodomy is illegal in the Muslim-majority country.

Jailing Mr Anwar, who has been sentenced to five years' prison, would strip away his parliament seat and remove the opposition's highest-profile figure.

Mr Anwar was initially acquitted in 2012 of the charge that he sodomised a young former male aide. The charge first emerged in 2008 shortly after he led the opposition to historic gains against Malaysia's now 57-year-old

ruling regime.

But an appeals court controversially overturned that acquittal early this year, convicting the charismatic political veteran and sentencing him to a five-year jail term. He has remained free on appeal.

The Federal Court began hearing Mr Anwar's final appeal on October 28.

Originally expected to end with a ruling last week, the proceedings have now been extended to this week due to the volume of submissions by each side.

Government prosecutor Shafee Abdullah insisted his side was "confident of our own case".

International rights case say the case represents a major test for the country's judiciary, long seen by critics as prone to manipulation by the ruling

'I see ... no other options except to acquit me of all the frivolous charges.'

Anwar Ibrahim
Opposition leader

United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).

The United States also has said Mr Anwar's conviction raised doubts about the rule of law.

A survey released on October 30 by leading polling organisation Merdeka Centre said 48 percent of Malaysians were "not confident" in the judiciary.

Mr Anwar, a popular former deputy prime minister with the UMNO, previously spent six years in prison on sodomy and corruption charges after a falling-out with the ruling party in the late 1990s.

That conviction was later overturned and he was freed in 2004.

Joining the opposition, he has led a three-party alliance to historic showings in recent elections with promises to end corruption, crony capitalism and the UMNO's divisive racial politics.

The opposition won the majority of votes in May 2013 elections.

But the regime, which has presided over decades of stability and strong economic growth, retained parliament thanks to decades of gerrymandering.

Since then, dozens of opposition politicians, activists and other government critics have been targeted with a range of charges, mainly sedition.

— AFP

KUALA LUMPUR

First MH370 disaster lawsuit filed

A MALAYSIAN family on October 31 sued the government and the beleaguered national carrier for negligence in the mysterious disappearance of flight MH370, in what is believed to be the first lawsuit filed over the disaster.

The suit was filed by lawyers on behalf of the two underage sons of Jee Jing Hang, who was on board the ill-fated Malaysia Airlines flight.

Gary Chong, a lawyer for Mr Jee's relatives, said the suit was filed in a Malaysian court on October 31.

The family is suing Malaysia Airlines for breach of contract, saying the deeply troubled carrier failed in its contractual responsibility to deliver Mr Jee to his destination.

The family is also suing Malaysia's government, civil aviation authorities, immigration department and air force for negligence.

"Our clients are after the truth. We have confidence in our judiciary system that this suit will be heard and dealt with fairly," a statement by the family's legal team said.

Mr Chong said the family would seek damages but declined to specify a figure.

MH370 inexplicably disappeared on March 8 with 239 people aboard en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in what remains one of history's great aviation mysteries.

Malaysia's government believes the flight diverted to the far southern Indian Ocean, citing sketchy satellite data, but no trace has been found despite an extensive search.

Neither the government nor the airline has revealed any results from investigations launched in the aftermath of the tragedy, and consistently stress that only recovery of the lost Boeing 777 aircraft will provide full answers.

Some next-of-kin bitterly accuse the government and airline of a bungled response and cover-up, charges that are strenuously denied.

Malaysia's air force came under particular fire after top brass acknowledged military radar had tracked the red-eye flight as it doubled back over

Malaysian airspace after diverting.

The air force took no action, saying the radar blip was not considered a security threat.

The chances of success for the lawsuit were not immediately clear.

Aviation experts said that under international law it is an airline's responsibility to prove it was not to blame for an accident.

The lack of evidence could complicate that task for the carrier.

The airline also has been hampered by the loss in July of flight MH17, apparently shot down over Ukraine with the loss of 298 lives in another still-unexplained disaster, and is in dire financial straits as business has dried up.

A state-linked investment fund has directly taken over the airline as part of a rescue plan.

In countries such as China, home to the majority of MH370 passengers, and Malaysia, courts are considered relatively conservative regarding the awarding of damages. — AFP

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PHNOM PENH

Cambodia arrests raise organ trafficking fears

The first-ever case of alleged kidney trading has prompted concerns over a wider illegal trade in body parts between Cambodia and Thailand

A SEVEN-INCH scar runs diagonally across the left flank of his skinny torso, a glaring reminder of an operation he hoped would save his family from debt but instead plunged him into shame.

Chhay, 18, sold his kidney for US\$3000 in an illicit deal that saw him whisked from a rickety one-room house on the outskirts of the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh to a gleaming hospital in the medical tourism hub of neighbouring Thailand.

His shadowy journey, which went unnoticed by authorities two years ago, has instigated Cambodia's first-ever cases of organ trafficking and the arrests of two alleged brokers.

It has also raised fears that other victims hide beneath the radar.

At the corrugated iron shack he shares with nine relatives, Chhay says a neighbour persuaded him and a pair of brothers, all from the marginalised Cham Muslim minority, to sell their kidneys to rich Cambodians on dialysis.

"She said you are poor, you don't have money, if you sell your kidney you will be able to pay off your debts," the teenager said, requesting his real name be withheld.

Similar stories have long been com-

mon in the slums of India and Nepal, better-known hotspots for traffickers. Up to 10,000, or 10 percent, of the organs transplanted globally each year are trafficked, according to the latest World Health Organization estimate.

But on discovering the broker earned US\$10,000 for each kidney they sacrificed, the donors filed complaints, alerting police in June to a potential new organ trade route.

"Kidney trafficking is not like other crimes ... If the victims don't speak up, we will never know," said Phnom Penh's deputy police chief Prum Sonthor.

In July his force charged Yem Azisah, 29, believed to be a cousin of the sibling donors, and her step-father, known as Phalla, 40, with human trafficking.

The pair are being detained and await trial.

Trafficking is a widespread problem in impoverished Cambodia and police routinely investigate cases linked to the sex trade, forced marriage or slavery, but this was the first related to organs.

"This is easy money that earns a lot of income, so we are worried," said Mr Prum, adding there were at least two other Cambodian donors taken to Thailand who had not filed complaints.

The complicity of donors, whether compelled by poverty or coerced by unscrupulous brokers, makes it an under-reported crime which is difficult to expose.

In August media reports emerged about new alleged organ trafficking cases at a military hospital in Phnom Penh.

Mr Prum, who investigated the case, said it was a training exercise between Chinese and Cambodian doc-

tors, using voluntary Vietnamese donors and patients.

But he was unable to rule out whether money changed hands.

Chhay watches from the sidelines as boys his age play football, two years on from an operation that has left him feeling weak, ashamed and still in debt.

"I want to tell others not to have their kidney removed like me. I regret it. I cannot work hard any more. Even walking I feel exhausted," he said. In July he started work at a garment factory.

Little research has been done on the impact of transplants on paid donors like Chhay but the WHO has reported an association with depression and perceived deterioration in health, highlighting the lack of follow-up care.

Chhay remembers few details of a transaction that still haunts him, claiming no knowledge of the Thai city where he was taken or the woman he sold his kidney to.

In Thailand health authorities are trying to shed more light on the murky trade, with several Bangkok hospitals under investigation.

Focus has fallen on the documents traffickers forge to prove donors and recipients are related, a requirement in many countries where it is illegal to sell an organ.

"We've asked hospitals to be more careful" when checking documents, Thai medical council president Somsak Lolekha said, adding his organisation was reviewing its transplant regulations.

Driving the demand for a black market in organs is the globally soaring number of sick patients waiting for transplants, especially kidneys.

In Thailand alone there were 4321



A Cambodian victim displays a scar in his kidney region at his home in Phnom Penh on August 4. Photo: AFP

people on the organ waiting list up until August with deceased donors' organs forming around half of the 581 kidneys transplanted last year, according to the Thai Red Cross Organ Donation Centre (ODC).

World over this increasing reliance on living donors has left desperate patients scouring for volunteers in their families, or, in some cases, recruiting underground.

Prompted by concerns over trafficking the ODC, which oversees organ donations, launched a pilot project in April making it compulsory for hospitals to provide them with details of living donors.

"Before they could come to Thailand without our knowledge. We are

concerned about hospitals where they are not following rules, that's why we asked for a register of living donors," said ODC director Visist Dhitavat.

While regulations are being tightened experts fear the booming medical tourism industry in Thailand, reputed for high-quality but low-cost care, could give rise to more criminal networks cashing-in on the vulnerable.

"It could be the tip of the iceberg," said Jeremy Douglas, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime representative for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, on the recent Cambodian arrests.

"There could be a lot of others [cases] that aren't just simply coming to trial." - AFP

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Amount paid to a Cambodian man for his kidney

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SYDNEY

Pay-outs for Australia's polluters

MEASURES giving polluters financial incentives to reduce emissions blamed for climate change are set to be approved by the Australian government, in a move critics described as ineffective environmental policy.

The so-called "direct action" plan, which will see the government pay companies to increase energy efficiency. The bill is expected to be approved later this month by the lower House of Representatives where the conservative government of Prime Minister Tony Abbott has a majority. It comes after Mr Abbott axed a tax on greenhouse gas emissions introduced by the previous Labor administration.

China and the United States are the world's worst emitters of greenhouse gases, according to a report by international scientists issued last month, but Australia's output is considered high per capita.

Under the plan, competitive auctions will be held, with the government entering into contracts to buy emissions reductions from successful bidders at the lowest cost, Mr Hunt said.

He added that the emissions reductions would be "real and significant".

But the Labor opposition leader Bill Shorten criticised the scheme, describing it as "paying big polluters to keep polluting, which is terrible policy". - AFP

GUIYU

Boom in E-waste recycling brings wealth but ill-health

MOUNTAINS of discarded remote controls litter the warehouse floor. In a dimly lit room, women on plastic stools pry open the devices, as if shucking oysters, to retrieve the circuitry inside.

In a narrow alley a few blocks over, a father and son from a distant province wash microchips in plastic buckets. Men haul old telephones and computer keyboards by the shovelful off a truck.

Some items will be refurbished and resold, others will be stripped for components or materials such as copper or gold.

Business is booming in the Chinese town of Guiyu, where the world's electronic waste ends up for recycling, and is set to get even better.

But the industry has a heavy environmental cost. Electronic remnants are strewn in a nearby stream, and the air is acrid from the burning of plastic, chemicals and circuitboards.

Heavy metal contamination has turned the air and water toxic, and children have high lead levels in their blood, according to an August study by researchers at Shantou University Medical College.

Much of the e-waste that passed through Guiyu over the past few decades came from outside China.

Western countries are now making a greater effort to process their own e-waste, but Chinese domestic supply will soon be more than enough to step into any breach, campaigners say.

China's surging economy has transformed the country into a consuming power in its own right. It is now the world's largest smartphone market, and use of electronic devices has soared.

"Before, the waste was shipped from other parts of the world coming into China. That used to be the biggest source and the biggest problem," said Ma Jun, director of the Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs, one of China's foremost environmental NGOs.

"But now, China has become a consuming power of its own," Mr Ma said.



Workers dismantle electronic waste at a workshop at Guiyu Township in Shantou City on August 9. Photo: AFP

"We have I think 1.1 billion cell phones used, and the life of our gadgets has become shorter and shorter."

"I think the wave is coming," he added. "It's going to be a bigger problem."

China currently generates 6.1 million metric tonnes of e-waste a year, compared with 7.2 million for the US and 48.8 million globally, according to the United Nations University's Solving the E-waste Problem (StEP) Initiative.

But while US e-waste production has increased by 13 percent over the past five years, China's has nearly doubled, setting the Asian giant on track to overtake the US as the world's biggest source as early as 2017.

Nowhere are the profit and environmental toll of e-waste recycling more on display than in Guiyu in the southeast, where some 80,000 of 130,000 residents work in the loosely regulated industry, according to a 2012

local government estimate.

More than 1.6 million tonnes of e-waste pass through Guiyu each year, with recycling worth 3.7 billion yuan (\$600 million) annually and attracting migrants from near and far.

"This work is tiring, but the salary is okay compared with the work in town," said a 30-year-old surnamed Ma, who left a salesman's job to dismantle electronics. "You can make 4000 or 5000 yuan [\$650 to \$815] a month."

At the same time, the town has made worldwide headlines for the devastating health impact of its tainted environment.

"People think this cannot be allowed to go on," said Leo Chen, 28, a financial worker who grew up in Guiyu.

The situation was better than a decade ago, he said, following authorities' interventions, but the effects of years of pollution remain.

Lai Yun, a Greenpeace researcher

who has often visited Guiyu, said, "From the government's perspective, e-waste gathering and processing is important for the local economy," Mr Lai said. "Research has shown that 80 percent of households are involved in this work. So, if they don't expand this industry, these residents will need some other kind of employment."

Adam Minter, author of "Junkyard Planet", on the economics of the global scrap industry said the overall picture was mixed.

"There is an environmental good happening there. They're extending the life span of usable components, they're pulling things out and recycling them, or sending them to Korea and Japan, something that's very expensive to do in the US and the EU," he said.

"Yet they do it in a way that's not always good for human health and the environment," he added. "Recycling is a morally complicated act." — AFP

MANILA

Rare dwarf buffalo gets good news

THE population of the Philippines' dwarf buffalo, one of the world's rarest animals, has grown to its largest since efforts to save them from extinction began, conservationists said on October 31.

An annual survey counted 382 tamaraws in a protected mountain area this year, an increase from 345 in 2013, according to data from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The tamaraw, famed for its distinct v-shaped horns, can be found only in the mountains of Mindoro, a farming island in the central Philippines.

The stocky tamaraw, with its chocolate brown coat, runs wild in the forest and weighs half as much as the more common carabao, which is used by farmers in the Philippines to plough rice fields.

"The tamaraw is the flagship species of the Philippines. It is our moral obligation and international commitment to preserve them," forest ranger Rodel Boyles, who heads a joint government and private sector conservation effort, said.

"If they are not protected, the species might get wiped out in five years," he said.

The tamaraw is considered "critically endangered", two steps away from extinction, by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Hunting and the destruction of their habitat to make way for grazing areas for cattle led to their near decimation, as the population fell from 10,000 in the 1900s to just 154 by 2000, according to the WWF.

The government and private sector's Tamaraw Conservation Programme aims to double the dwarf buffalo's population from 300 in the mid-2000s to 600 by 2020, Gregg Yan, a local spokesperson for the WWF, said.

This requires ramping up forest patrols to ward off poachers and installing hidden cameras in the mountains to better understand the behaviour of the beast, Mr Yann said.

A team of 30 forest rangers patrol a 37-acre portion of a mountain that is considered the buffalo's "core habitat", Mr Boyles said.

"We are hopeful that their numbers will continue increasing," he added. — AFP

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Dated: 3 November 2014

BEIJING

Residents play mahjong on a street in Shanghai on January 6. Photo: AFP

Traditional game latest victim of Xi's graft purge

MAHJONG has become the latest "extravagance" to be condemned in censorious official Chinese media, as pleasure-seeking Communist Party officials are urged to shun the game in the name of curbing corruption.

Chinese people have been clacking mahjong tiles for more than a century, with some accounts even naming its inventor as the ancient sage Confucius. But officials have taken their hobby too far, according to a commentary in the *People's Daily* last week.

"The phenomenon of Communist officials going to rural retreats to have fun, play mahjong and poker ... must resolutely stop," the commentary on October 28 said, referring to the widespread practice of betting on games "to add a little stimulation".

The article called for an equally "resolute" end to government staff "spending public money to visit historical sites in the name of 'study', and then simply going to any old fun place".

The commentary was the latest in a series of state-issued broadsides against official extravagance, as China's President Xi Jinping attempts to improve the Communist party's image in response to widespread anger over endemic corruption.

The campaign has led to an unprecedented investigation into retired security czar Zhou Yongkang, though the vast majority of officials punished since Mr Xi came to power have been from the government's lowest levels.

The campaign against graft has been blamed for falling sales of luxury items, and hit business at expensive hotels and restaurants, according to reports.

But there has been a backlash by some officials who have held secret sauna parties and been hiding alcohol in plastic water bottles as they seek to get around the crackdown on extravagance, the *People's Daily* said last year.

"Constant reports of saunas held at farm houses" were evidence of a growing culture of "low key extravagance" that was damaging the new president's anti-corruption campaign, it added.

The Chinese government on October 27 issued a ban on private clubs in historical buildings and parks, which are often frequented by officials, state-run media reported.

Critics argue that party controls over China's media and courts limit the effectiveness of anti-corruption campaigns, which have often been announced by incoming Chinese leaders in recent decades.

Chinese officials are not obliged to disclose their financial assets, while China has jailed around a dozen activists who held small-scale street protests calling for such disclosure.

Despite claims linking it back to Confucius there is no consensus on

the definitive origin of mahjong, a strategic game generally played with a set of 144 tiles, but many historians believe the modern game dates back to 19th century China.

The historical connection has done little for the Chinese national team, which has fared badly on the international circuit in recent years.

At this year's Open Mahjong Championship in Germany the highest-ranked Chinese player came in 30th, behind Japanese and European competitors, according to the state-run *China Daily*.

Some Chinese commented that their "shock at the news was no less than the Brazilians when they lost 1-7 to Germany at the semi-final of the World Cup", the newspaper added.

Users of China's social media services reacted to the mahjong ban with a mix of approval and bafflement.

"You can ban officials from playing mahjong in public places, but it's fine in their own homes," wrote one user of Sina Weibo, a service similar to Twitter.

"If this ban is introduced, how will officials in Chengdu live?" asked another user, referring to the southwestern Chinese city whose residents are famous for their love of the game.

Another commentator referred to recent government restrictions on buying several products, which in some cases require real-name registration before purchase.

"Buying matches, petrol, fruit knives all needs public declaration, and now playing mahjong needs public declaration. It seems everything must now be publicly declared, except officials' assets." - AFP

'The phenomenon of officials going to rural retreats to have fun, play mahjong and poker must resolutely stop.'

People's Daily Weekly

MOSCOW

Russia offers N Korea rails for minerals

RUSSIA is eyeing a project worth about US\$25 billion to overhaul North Korea's railway network in return for access to mineral resources in the hermit state, Moscow's government daily reported on October 30.

The mammoth project would involve the modernisation of about 3000 kilometres (1875 miles) of the Stalinist nation's ageing railroads over a 20-year period, minister for development of Far Eastern Russia Alexander Galushka told state-run *Rossiskaya Gazeta*.

"It is a commercial project that is

mutually advantageous," Mr Galushka was quoted as saying.

The railway upgrades would focus first on the sections near deposits of natural resources, said the minister.

Income from the exploitation of deposits would then go to a joint Russian-Korean company to fund the railroad overhaul, he said.

North Korea is thought to be lying on vast reserves of resources, including uranium, iron ore, magnesium and other minerals.

North Korea had warm ties with the former Soviet Union based on

shared ideology. Russia retains relatively close ties with its neighbour but has backed Western powers in dealing with Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions.

In May, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law cancelling 90 percent of North Korea's \$10.94 billion debt to Russia from Soviet-era loans.

Moscow has looked to boost ties with Asia in the face of harsh sanctions from the EU and US over its role in the Ukraine crisis.

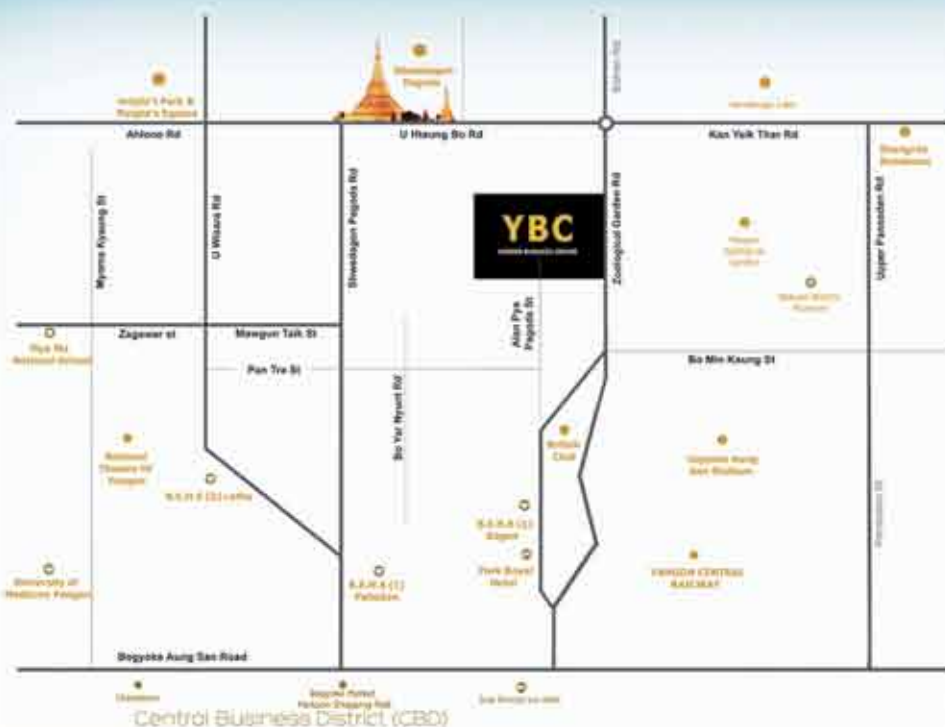
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Dated: 3rd November, 2014

OPINION**CAMBODIA**

Cambodian history shows Myanmar's need for plan B

SEBASTIAN STRANGIO

It hasn't been a good year for Myanmar's reforms. Journalists have been arrested and killed. A committee in the military-dominated parliament has refused to amend a constitutional provision that blocks Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from running for president, robbing her story of its fairytale ending.

Meanwhile, the loosening of political controls has uncorked the genie of Burmese religio-ethnic chauvinism, dormant during decades of dictatorship, and the country's ethnic periphery remains conflict-torn and far beyond the control of the central government - as it has for the bulk of Myanmar's history. More than three years after President Thein Sein took office and initiated the reforms, there is backtracking on nearly every front.

Two decades ago, another Southeast Asian nation made a similar emergence from isolation, and experienced similar challenges. Indeed, Cambodia's progress over the past 23 years offers a cautionary tale not only about the likely course of Myanmar's "transition", but also the assumptions we make about such transitions to begin with.

Cambodia opened to the world on October 23, 1991, with the signing of the Paris Peace Agreements. By the time the accord was signed, the country had been at war for more than 12 years; before that had come the murderous rule of the Khmer Rouge, which led to the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people; and, before that, more civil war. The Paris treaty sought to finally bring peace, democracy, and some semblance of normality to a long-suffering country. To implement the accords, it created the UNTAC mission of 1992-93, under whose benign auspices Cambodia would be reborn. As Cambodia opened, the world rushed in. Thousands of foreign consultants, UN staff and aid workers arrived. Development aid typhoons in. Phnom Penh, a ramshackle capital of golden spires and potholed streets, became a steamy outpost of what Alex de Waal has termed the "humanitarian international".

As with Myanmar's reforms, expectations were high, all the more so since Cambodia's opening coincided with a crucial historical juncture: the fall of the Soviet Union and the wave of liberal optimism that followed in its wake. In 1989, Francis Fukuyama had famously proclaimed the "end of history", arguing that communism's collapse heralded "the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government".

After four decades of ideological stalemate, history had chosen a winner. Cambodia quickly became a symbol and subject of the new global optimism. With history at an end, the "international community", working with empowered local NGOs, would usher a victim of Cold War realpolitik along the road to the democratic promised land.

But while the West had experienced a "revolution of moral concern", as Michael Ignatieff described it, no such change had taken place inside Cambodia. The government that emerged from the \$2 billion-plus UNTAC mission in 1993 was an unstable coalition between two wartime enemies: the steely Hun Sen, prime minister of the regime installed by Vietnam after it overthrew of the Khmer

Rouge in 1979; and the feckless Prince Norodom Ranariddh, head of the royalist Funcinpec party. When UNTAC wound up in late 1993, the civil war resumed. In July 1997, Hun Sen ousted Ranariddh in bloody factional street clashes; 18 months later, the Cambodian army finally defeated what was left of the Khmer Rouge. And so the Cambodia civil war came to an end - not through resolutions and treaties, but through military force and political deals. Hun Sen has ruled the country in much the same wayever since.

Today, Cambodia remains far from the promised land. Hun Sen's achievements over the past 23 years have been substantial - peace, political stability, economic growth - but they are also highly contingent. The country's stability rests not on any deep social consensus, but on a delicate balance between competing patronage networks. The gap between rich and poor grows wider, while tens of thousands have been thrown off their land to make way for large-scale agribusiness projects - some little more than cover for lucrative logging operations. Cambodia's political system has little apparent aim beyond its own perpetuation, leaving many ordinary people to live off the crumbs.

But the "humanitarian international" lives on. Twenty years after the UN struck its blue tents, Cambodian civic

'The change can only come from below - from the Cambodian and Myanmar people themselves.'

culture is awash in democratic symbols and human rights narratives. Government officials speak the language of universal values and "good governance". Artificial UN events like International Human Rights Day are official holidays. Colourful NGO insignia can be seen everywhere, on posters, banners, t-shirts, bumper-stickers, calendars, coffee mugs and the sides of the white 4WDs that roar around the capital Phnom Penh. But that's about as deep as it goes. In Cambodia, the end of history produced not democracy, but a façade-an almost pure abstraction.

Now, with Myanmar's own reforms heading in a similar direction, development experts and human rights groups warn that the country is in danger of becoming "another Cambodia". Their warnings contain a presumption that things could have turned out substantially otherwise. But could they?

Though Francis Fukuyama's controversial thesis has fallen out of fashion, his central idea still seems to pervade the way we think about development. The "end of history" brought us to a point where all the important social, political, and economic questions had been supposedly settled. "Development" was seen as merely a matter of bringing in proven expertise to implement proven solutions. For the Swiss critic Gilbert Rist, the choice of the biological metaphor was telling: "development" implied a rational, predictable course to social and political growth. As an acorn grows into an oak, so would the "developing" world become "developed", polit-

ically (via democracy), economically (via free markets) and morally (via human rights). All this radiant troika required was the necessary sunshine and nutrients - the necessary "capacity building".

These assumptions are still very much in evidence today in Myanmar. With reforms faltering, the reaction of many people is to question not the model, but the implementation. The international community gave too many concessions too quickly, say the international human rights groups. The US government should "ensure" Myanmar respects its "commitments", and reimpose sanctions if they fail to do so, say the Republicans in Congress. At its extreme, the case is made that foreign countries should drag Myanmar's leaders kicking and screaming into the promised land.

But what if it's not the implementation that is flawed, but the model itself? In my new book *Hun Sen's Cambodia*, I describe how the international intervention in Cambodia produced not democracy, but a "mirage" of democratic government behind which power works much as it always has - through relationships of patronage between powerful individuals. Meanwhile, the international commitment to Cambodia has devolved into a "development complex" that has entrenched dependency and now largely escaped the control of a fictive and divided "international community". The lesson of Cambodia is not that things somehow took a wrong turn on the road to democracy; it's that the political road meanders, reverses, plays off in countless directions. There's no iron guarantee it will end at the desired destination at all.

This is an important lesson for Myanmar today. Cambodia's recent history shows the limits of what can be achieved by moral suasion and international pressure. True, outside pressure has forced Hun Sen to release political prisoners and prevented the most overt forms of repression - as it has to some extent in Myanmar. These achievements are noteworthy, but limited. Such pressure can buy some short-term gains, but it can do little to force either countries' leaders to adopt the normative outlook that respects democracy or human rights as concepts. This change can only come from below - from the Cambodian and Myanmar people themselves.

According to the American historian Mark Lilla the problem with thinking about countries in terms of where they lie on a linear development is it obscures the importance of local history and context, which do more to determine a country's political fate than the templates of international development.

Lilla writes, "If the only choices we can imagine are democracy or le déluge, we exclude the possibility of improving non-democratic regimes without either trying forcibly to transform them (American-style) or hoping vainly (European-style) that human rights treaties, humanitarian interventions, legal sanctions, NGO projects, and bloggers with iPhones will make a lasting difference." The only sensible question to ask about countries like Myanmar is therefore a sobering one: "What's Plan B?"

Sebastian Strangio is a journalist and author based in Phnom Penh. His book, *Hun Sen's Cambodia*, is published through Silk Worm Books and is available now from Monument Books in Yangon. Follow him on twitter @sstrangio.

BEIJING

Afghanistan and China vow long-term partnership, as Nato troops pull out

THE new president of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani outlined his vision of extensive ties with China at the start of a four-day visit there on October 28, as NATO combat troops prepare to withdraw from his country.

Mr Ghani, once a US-based academic, was sworn in as Afghanistan's new head of state last month in the war-torn Asian nation's first democratic transfer of power.

His first state visit as president is to resource-hungry China, which is seeking greater investment opportunities in Afghanistan.

"We look at China as a strategic partner, in the short term, medium term, long term and very long term," he told President Xi Jinping at Beijing's Great Hall of the People.

Mr Xi's "vision" for the continent had opened "not just a new chapter for Asia, but an entirely new book", he said.

Hailing Mr Ghani as "an old friend of the Chinese people", Mr Xi said he was prepared to work toward "a new era of cooperation in China-Afghanistan relations" to "take development to a new depth and breadth".

China shares only a 76-kilometre (47-mile) border with Afghanistan's remote far northeast, but has a keen interest in its neighbour's mineral resources.

It has already secured major oil and copper-mining concessions in Afghanistan, which is believed to have more than US\$1 trillion worth of mineral re-

sources, according to studies by the US Geological Survey.

But all NATO combat troops will leave the country by December, leaving Afghan troops and police to battle Taliban insurgents on their own.

There are now about 40,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan, down from their 2011 peak of around 140,000, and their departure raises questions over stability in the country.

A residual force of around 12,000 soldiers, including 9800 Americans and 500 Britons, will remain under a security pact signed by Mr Ghani, focusing on training local forces and counter-terrorism.

China will provide 1.5 billion yuan (\$245 million) in "free assistance" to Afghanistan over the next three years, foreign ministry official Kong Xuanyou told reporters after the October 28 ceremony.

Mr Kong said Mr Ghani expressed "readiness and staunch support" in the struggle against "terrorist forces", which Beijing blames for a string of attacks in its far-western Xinjiang region, the homeland of the mostly Muslim Uighur minority.

China's international role has come under criticism from some parties including US President Barack Obama, who in an August interview with the *New York Times* called Beijing a "free rider" for not doing more to quell violence in the Middle East.



Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai (right) and Chinese President Xi Jinping (left) inspect Chinese honour guards during a welcome ceremony outside the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on October 28. Photo: AFP

China's state-run media struck back with editorials blasting Mr Obama's remark.

"The US accusation, which comes out of nowhere, is nothing but an attempt for Washington to find a scapegoat for its failed policy in Iraq," the official Xinhua news agency wrote in response.

China and Afghanistan signed four agreements on October 28, including documents on expanding technical and commercial cooperation.

Mr Ghani's choice of Beijing for the trip only weeks after taking office is symbolically significant, Chinese analysts say.

"Seeking other sources of support

is essential to Afghanistan's stability and development," China Institute of Contemporary International Relations research fellow Fu Xiaoqiang told the state-run *Global Times* newspaper.

"China, as the most capable nation in the neighbourhood, has to be its first option," Mr Fu added. — AFP

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Anim behav

ON a sunny morning, a teenage boy with a bundle of grass in his hand stood next to the hippopotamus's enclosure at the Yangon Zoological Garden. He waved the grass at the hippo, enticing it to come and eat. When it approached him and opened its mouth, the boy pulled back his hand. He did it three times without feeding the hippo.

"Modern living has made young people poor at respecting nature, as the natural environment is replaced by housing developments," said U Aung Myo Chit, an independent wildlife biologist, when asked if such behaviour is acceptable.

He called the zoo a "gene bank" that helps educate the public about the nature and behaviour of wildlife and teaches a love and respect of nature and animals.

"Unfortunately, many youth today haven't seen all the animals and birds of our country because they live far from nature. They visit the zoo for recreation, not for learning about nature," he said, contrasting young visitors today to those of the 1990s and earlier.

Ill-treatment of animals is quite common at the zoo, U Aung Myo Chit said. People have thrown plastic balls and a shoe into the hippo's open mouth. Recently, the eyes of two crocodiles were seriously injured after a man poked them with an umbrella, and several cobras died after being hit with a stone.

Some visitors have even beaten the hands of monkeys with dry sticks when they've stretched out their hands to pick up food.

"That behaviour is wrong," U Aung Myo Chit said.

While he feels it is important to raise the public's awareness and respect for the environment, he acknowledges that it will take a lot of work. Common wisdom suggests that it takes from seven to 21 times - visits, in this case - to educate a person to change an ingrained behaviour.

"Will he or she visit the zoo 21 times? It's a challenge for us," he said.

The incidents have attracted the attention of the zoo's environmentalists, who have decided that awareness must be raised. They plan especially to target children, who tend to learn more quickly.

On May 21, six activists founded the Environmental and Education Group. From October 11, every Saturday and Sunday the group explains the nature and behaviour of the zoo's flora and fauna to visitors for the purpose of nature conservation. They teach the importance of treating the animals kindly, as well as place information campaign posters in the zoos in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw, and in Nay Pyi Taw Safari park.

The group has been greatly welcomed by zoo staff since many incidents of animal cruelty have been happening when the keepers are not constantly watching visitors.

"The animals are depressed enough in close confinement. It's not enough that they are well-looked after by the zoo keepers. The visitors need to treat them with respect," said Dr Khin Sane Win, a member of the education group.



ZON PANN PWINT

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al viour

Contrary to the belief of some zoo visitors, animals do not digest plastic bags. Photos: Yu Yu

She said some creatures like owls are nocturnal and sleep in dens and nests in the daytime. When the visitors don't see them, they throw stones at the enclosed spaces.

"The children throw stones at animals when they are motionless because they want to see the animals be active. It isn't torture, but they do need to be educated on how to deal with them in the zoo. It is crucially important for the zoo, which has never done it [this education] in the past."

Dr Tun Myint, a veterinarian at the Yangon zoo since 1992, said some animals in the zoo have died due to public ignorance. Years ago, a camel died shortly after being fed a loaf of bread wrapped in plastic, which caused airway obstruction. Three deer lost their lives in the same way after eating mango wrapped in plastic, which caused digestive problems.

"I ran and checked the camel soon after the staff informed us," Dr Tun Myint said. "But we couldn't save its life."

At the time, such incidents weren't common, and the zoo didn't take immediate action except to put up posters about the incident and alert keepers to maintain a watch on visitors.

"But the incidents are now very common," said U Sein Tin, who is in charge of the zoo's reptile department.

This means the public is at greater risk of harm, too - visitors who poke a stick or umbrella at a poisonous snake can end up with a nasty bite.

U Aung Myo Chit added that respect for animals doesn't mean only kind treatment by visitors. It also pertains to the zoo's ability to create a cage, tank or enclosure that closely mimics the animals' natural habitat. These days, there is concern about whether the zoo's animals are able to live in captivity as well as they would live in the wild.

Since the question has been raised, the Yangon zoo is planning to expand its enclosures, especially for tigers and bears, whose spaces currently are much too confined.

When the zoo was founded in 1906, its planners designed cages and enclosures for the purpose of exhibiting the animals only. According to data collected on September 30, there are now 601 mammals, 583 birds and 202 reptiles living on the zoo's 58.16 acres (0.23 square kilometres) of land.

"Later, the environmentalists started to consider the animals' welfare. Wild animals need their freedom and they don't enjoy captivity," U Aung Myo Chit said. "So we'll gradually change the spaces in order to get closest to their natural habitat."



WEEKLY PREDICTIONS

NOVEMBER 3 - 9, 2014

AQUARIUS | Jan 20 - Feb 18



Good health and good sense are two great blessings. Believe that the greatest right in the world is the right to be wrong. You should speak little and only when absolutely necessary. Know that drama is not effective without sorrow. The more fearless you are, the better you will be able to face disturbances.

LEO | July 23 - Aug 22



Plato said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." Nearly all people can stand adversity but no one can get power honestly. Acknowledge that power leads to the abuse of power, and abuse of power leads to the loss of power. There is but one correct use of power, and it is to serve people.

PISCES | Feb 19 - March 20



Make time to care for yourself. Get into great shape. Work with a coach to improve your skills. Commune with nature to achieve harmony with everybody and everything. Reflect on what you want to stand for and what will be your impact. An unexpected opportunity may change your mind.

VIRGO | Aug 23 - Sept 22



A life free of obstacles and difficulties would reduce all possibilities and power to zero. Life would lose its creative tension. Know that the problem of mass ignorance gives meaning to education and problems give meaning to life. Know that failure is the opportunity to begin again more intelligently.

ARIES | Mar 21 - Apr 19



Problems follow logically and directly from a self-destructive premise. Establish a new key premise in your thinking to restore your mind to peace and tranquility. Let the law of harmony operate in your mind and body. Your mind knows the answers to all questions, and it does not argue or talk back.

LIBRA | Sept 23 - Oct 22



Stay enthusiastic, encourage others and believe in people, and you could be empowered yourself. Your assumptions about others must allow you to continually motivate and develop them. Know that positive assumptions will stimulate positive leadership. Treat people to a vision of themselves to help them advance.

TAURUS | Apr 20 - May 20



People do what people see, but you should see more. Don't follow only a dream. Make up your mind to work for better and bigger things. Keep asking yourself, "Survival, success or significance?" You can expect to be familiar with potential partners who can help you change for the better.

SCORPIO | Oct 23 - Nov 21



High morale comes from having faith in your ideas. People must buy into you before they buy into your dreams. Success is really the result of planning, and it happens where preparation and opportunity meet.

GEMINI | May 21 - June 20



Fear nothing about pursuing a vision. Assess your individual perception, probabilities and possibilities to make the right decision. Let people see your heart before they see your hope. Go for the win-win goal. Remember, when you help people get what they want, they will help you.

SAGITTARIUS | Nov 22 - Dec 21



Policies are many but principles are few. Policies will change but principles never do. The problem of ill health gives meaning to medicine. The problem of social disorder gives meaning to government. Know that life's heaviest burden is having nothing to carry. Know that everyone wants to feel valuable.

CANCER | June 21 - July 22



Your subconscious never sleeps but it controls all your vital functions. Forgive yourself and everyone else before you go to sleep. Believe that your future is in your subconscious mind, and make sure to stay far away from misdeeds and wrong actions. A beautiful heart is in connection with love always.

CAPRICORN | Dec 22 - Jan 19



Personal integrity and right actions must be your priority before you gain popularity and fame. It is essential to begin developing self-discipline in a small way today in order to be disciplined in a big way tomorrow. Good thoughts and good intentions must be translated into w right action.

AUNG MYIN KYAW

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What's on

NOVEMBER 3 - 9

Got an event?
List it in What's On!
whatsonmt@gmail.com

ART

Nov 1-5 "Uncovering H Lwin" Oil painting by H Lwin. The Yangon Gallery, People's Park, near the Planetarium, Ahlone Road, Dagon 10am-6pm
Nov 1-7 "Travelling with Black Sheep" Aung Kyi Soe's second solo exhibition. Nawaday Tharlar Gallery, Room 304, 3rd floor, 20B Yaw Min Gyi Road, Dagon 1-5pm
Nov 7-9 "Fragrance of Myanmar" Paintings by 13 Myanmar artists. The Yangon Gallery, People's Park, Ahlone Road, Dagon 10am-6pm

FILM

Start times at Mingalar (1, 2), Thwin, Shae Shaung (1, 2) and Nay Pyi Taw cinemas are 10am, noon, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm and 8pm. Start times at Junction Square and Maw Tin are 10am, 1pm and 4pm daily and 7pm and 9:30pm on Friday and Saturday. Start times at Mingalar San Pya are 10am, 12:30pm, 3:30pm, 6:30pm and 9:30pm.

Nay Pyi Taw Cinema, near Sule Pagoda
John Wick. Directed by David Leitch. An ex-hitman gets back into the game to take down gangsters who ruined his life.
The Pirates! Directed by Peter Lord, Jeff Newitt. An animated story about the pirates of Blood Island.
The Equalizer: The Dawn of Justice. Directed by Antoine Fuqua. A former black ops commando is drawn back to fight Russian gangsters.
Mingalar Cinema 2, at Theingyi Zay, Latha
Bang Bang. Directed by Siddharth Anand. A bank receptionist and a charming vigilante go on a transcontinental chase.
Mingalar Cinema 2, at Dagon Center 2, Myaynigone
The Pirates!
Shae Shaung Cinema, Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada
Dracula Untold. Directed by Gary Shore. The true story of Vlad the Impaler is combined with the myth of Dracula.

Bang Bang.
Junction Square Cineplex, Kamaryut
Annabelle. Directed by Kevin Carraway. A demon-possessed toy doll terrorises a young family.
Reclaim. Directed by Alan White. Americans abroad stumble into a high-stakes underground scheme and must save their daughter.
Mingalar San Pya Cineplex, Phone Gyi Street and Anawrahta, Lanmadaw
John Wick.
Bang Bang.

MUSIC

Sept 5-Dec 31 Live Music. Thiripyitsaya Sky Bistro, 20th Floor, Sakura Tower, 7-10 pm
Nov 3 Monday blues. Mojo Bar, 135 Inya

MISC

Nov 4 Gallery conversation and drinks. Pansodan Gallery, 289 Pansodan Street, Kyauktada 7pm-late



Art by Aung Kyi Soe is on show at Nawaday Tharlar Gallery until November 7.



New literary festival set for January in Yangon

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LITERATURE for Peace, a new international literary festival featuring Nobel-prize-winning authors, will take place January 17-19 at the National Theatre of Yangon, organisers said. The festival committee expects over a hundred authors from around the country to attend, which would make it the second-largest such festival in Myanmar after the Irrawaddy Literary Festival.

As a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, of course, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be the Nobel-winner representing Myanmar, said Cho Cho Lwin, festival media officer. She said their goal is to secure the attendance of at least four Nobel winners, adding that they could not reveal the list of attendees yet "because we have to negotiate for their visas and schedules, et cetera". The festival events will include

conferences as well as exhibitions of cartoons, Nobel-winning books and their Myanmar translations, and photos about peacemakers Thakin Kodaw Hmaing and U Thant. There will be group discussions and a daily book bazaar as well as evening entertainment such as music and plays in which authors themselves will participate.

The festival will be lead by local writers and an independent donor from Norway. The patrons of the festival are U Thaw Kaung, Mg Paw Tun, Min Yu Wai, Mg Moe Thu, Mg Than Swe (Dawei), Ko Lay, Lal Twin Thar Saw Chit, Mg Khin Min (Danu Phyu) and Dr Khin Maung Nyo.

"I want local readers to be intimate with the Nobel literature," writer Mg Moe Thu said, adding that he hopes the festival will be a "one-stop shop" for the books. "The most important thing for the festival to do is collect the books written by the prize winners and to translate these and produce them" for public consumption.

"We are arranging it urgently now," he said.

About forty local publishers will participate in the project. Among the translations to be made available are seven books by Swiss artist and writer Hermann Hesse, 21 books by Pearl S Buck, an American known for her depictions of life in China, and 16 books by American John Steinbeck, known best for his Dustbowl trilogy about the Great Depression.

"We made a list and have about 100 books to produce," said U Win Cho, publisher and festival committee member. "Honestly, I don't know how many books we will produce."

The festival will be free for all to attend during the day. Ticket prices for nighttime events and entertainment programs have yet to be fixed.

Alfred Bernhard Nobel founded the Nobel Prize in 1897, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi won the Noble Prize for Peace in 1991.

Seaming tradition with modern flare

NANDAR AUNG
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FEEL a burden when people order clothes as they want and I don't want to make it," said Sann Baw Rar, the 34-year-old owner and designer of Shayi ready-to-wear fashions. "I think that those people want a tailor, not a designer. I don't accept orders from anyone."

Her business headquarters are clean and overwhelmingly white with blouses and skirts draped on hangers adding bursts of colour. Also on the walls are photographs of female models wearing her designs. The work room is full of packaged clothing, bolts of cotton and print fabric and bundles of accessories including lace and buttons.

Sann Baw Rar is known for her cotton-based Kachin-style garments, with Shayi becoming the first popularly known commercial brand of clothing made from traditional Myanmar designs and fabrics.

While she creates amazing designs with traditional fabrics, however, she herself prefers freestyle clothing. Her wardrobe contains items in subdued colours, black and brown mostly, which she finds most comfortable to wear during her daily routine.

But as a designer, Sann Baw Rar uses a variety of vibrant colours. She said she thinks everyone needs to be fashionable in their daily life, adding that fashion is closely related to one's mood.

"I never think that I am fashionable," she said. "For me, fashion is free. I don't want to feel uncomfortable because of my clothes. That's why I produce a ready-to-wear brand that is for everyone."

At age 10, she was already making clothes for her sisters and her dolls. After she finished her matriculation exam, she started to teach basic dressmaking classes in Mandalay, where she had grown up in her ethnic Kachin family.

She stepped into her professional career as a fashion designer after taking a dressmaking class with a famous designer, Daw Thidar Win. That led to her collaboration with weavers from Amarapura township with whom she planned to open a women's boutique shop in 2005. At that time there was no comparable brand-name boutique in Yangon.

She had moved from Mandalay to Yangon for her education to attend the University of Foreign Languages as an English major, but after she graduated in 2004, she passed up the opportunity to work for NGOs and earn a salary in dollars and stepped into the fashion field.

As she was the first daughter among her family's five children to get a degree in English, her mother had wanted her to take a good job and help look after the family. But Sann Baw Rar didn't follow her mother's way.

"It was my desire to be a designer for my career. Because people must work for their lifetime, and, as for me, I don't want to work at something that doesn't interest me," she said. "I almost forget everything when I'm making a new design, and I spend so much time on it."

Her family supported her idea to open a fashion shop. She was 25 at the time, and she was spending almost 24 hours a day cutting and sewing, proving that she could handle her



Sann Baw Rar displays a recent creation at her Bahan workshop. Photo: Aung Htay Hlaing

choice. Still she faced many difficulties in opening her first shop.

"I didn't know where I could buy fashion products or fabric and where I should open the shop. I didn't know anything," she said. "I gave all my time to my project."

She opened the first Shayi shop with six staff on Nawaday Street in Dagon township. The idea was to market traditional fabrics made into modern, casual garments – cotton dresses, blouses and longyis – that would appeal to a wide range of girls and women.

Shayi opened with 200 dresses, which Sann Baw Rar estimated would be enough to last two months. She was wrong. Within two weeks almost all the clothes were sold out.

"I couldn't live while the clothes hangers in my shop were empty," she said. "That was the toughest and happiest time in my life as a designer. I made more dresses, not sleeping or eating."

But then another problem arose. A few customers came back to her shop unhappy that their recent purchases had been bleached of their colour in the wash.

"At that time, the loom-woven cotton was either white or fawn colour.

If I needed red or blue fabric, it had to be dyed," she said. "So I cooperated with the weavers and asked them to change the type of dye they were using."

Seven months after the shop opened, she joined with local model agencies to exhibit her designs in September 2005 during Myanmar Greatest Fashion Week, as well as at other local fashion shows. The exposure brought her a lot of attention and support.

From basic dresses, blouses and skirts, she progressed to making more complex designs from lessons on the internet and by looking at foreign fashion catalogues, designer collections and design books.

"I'm blessed. I'm good at learning, and I learned about how a designer works from a concept, target and inspiration to make a show. I also learned pattern-making, colour theory, drawing and cutting by myself. Especially, I learned that a designer who produces a brand by himself must have an idea of a lifestyle, a way of thinking – a whole concept for the fashion show."

In 2010, she became a member of the Myanmar Fashion Designer Group and started to participate in their group

shows, including in 2011 The Fashion Phenomenon and many overseas fashion shows. Recently she was part of the group's two-day 2014-2015 Fashion Fair in Yangon.

Though she's gained much experience, these events always bring her stress, she said.

"I don't plan how many designs I will produce per month or per year. Sometimes I get an idea when I'm travelling," she said. "But when I'm working for a fashion show, I can feel pressure to produce."

Her most common daily feeling, however, is gratitude.

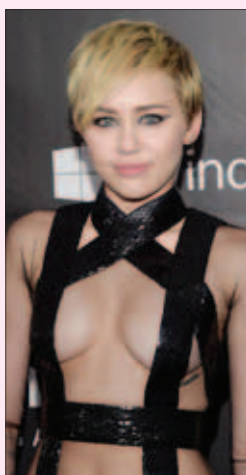
"I think I've got everything I've wanted since I was young," she said. "I've got lots of local customers who like my designs and quality products. That is the good result of many experiences and times during which I had to work a lot harder."

Today she runs three Shayi boutiques – two in Yangon and one in Mandalay. She plans to open another branch in Yangon and also in Monywa, as per her customers' demands.

She can also afford to take Sundays away from work – to spend time with her husband, go to church and plan to have a baby.



The Global Gossip



Singer Miley Cyrus wears this thing at the 2014 amfAR LA Inspiration Gala at Milk Studios in Hollywood on October 29. Photo: Jason Kempin/AFP

LOS ANGELES

Suge Knight arrested in row over photographer's camera

Notorious rap mogul Marion "Suge" Knight and comedian Micah "Katt" Williams were arrested October 29 for allegedly stealing a camera from a photographer, authorities said.

Knight, 49, and Williams, 43, have been charged with robbery, according to the Los Angeles district attorney.

Bail was set at a million dollars for Knight, who founded and runs Black Kapital Records, and who cofounded Death Row Records with hip-hop king Dr Dre in the early 1990s.

Williams' bail was set at \$75,000 dollars, prosecutor Jackie Lacey said.

She said the men allegedly took the camera from a celebrity photographer on September 5 in Beverly Hills.

Knight was arrested in Las Vegas and Williams in Inglewood. The producer, who has a prior conviction for assault with a deadly weapon, faces up to 30 years in jail if convicted.

Williams could face seven years behind bars.

WASHINGTON

US commando who killed Bin Laden to reveal identity

The US Navy Seal commando who fired the shots which killed al-Qaeda chief Osama Bin Laden is to reveal his identity in a Fox News television documentary this month, the network announced October 29.

The Man Who Killed Osama Bin Laden will air in two segments November 11-12, with the commando recounting his role in the raid that killed Bin Laden at his Pakistani compound in 2011.

The Navy SEAL "will share his story of training to be a member of America's elite fighting force and explain his involvement in Operation Neptune Spear, the mission that killed Bin Laden", the network said in a press release.

The program will also offer a look at a "secret" ceremony in which the commando donated the shirt he was wearing during the mission to the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City, it said.



British actor David Gyasi adjusts his cufflink on the red carpet for the European premiere of the film Interstellar in London on October 29. Photo: AFP/Leon Neal



Actress Kaley Cuoco beams with star pride. Photo: AFP/Mark Ralston

LOS ANGELES

'Big Bang Theory' actress Cuoco gets Hollywood star

The Big Bang Theory actress Kaley Cuoco was joined by fellow cast members from the hit TV sitcom as she received a star on Hollywood's storied Walk of Fame.

Jim Parsons (Sheldon), Johnny Galecki (Leonard), Simon Helberg (Howard) and Kunal Nayyar (Raj), as well as the show's co-creator Chuck Lorre, were on hand for the star-unveiling ceremony on Tinseltown's famous sidewalk.

"This cast has changed my life in many ways," said the 28-year-old, who plays Penny in the series, which has been running since 2007 and is in its eighth season.

"We laugh a lot (doing the show). This is a testament to the hard work and the dedication and the joy of doing something we love," said Lorre, as crowds gathered for the morning ceremony.

Big Bang averaged about 20 million viewers an episode last season, making it the most-watched comedy in America.

SAN FRANCISCO

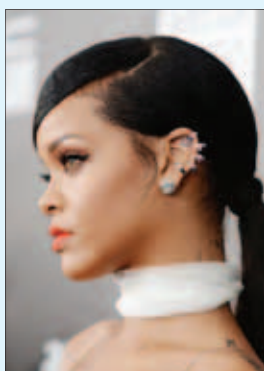
YouTube considers offering ad-free subscription

Subscriptions and even a streaming music service are among new options that YouTube is considering offering its more than one billion users, YouTube chief Susan Wojcicki said at a technology conference in California late October 27.

"YouTube right now is ad-supported, which is really great in the sense that it has enabled us to scale to a billion users; anyone can access the content," Wojcicki said in an online video clip of her on-stage conference chat.

"But there are going to be cases where people will say, 'I don't want to see the ads,' or, 'I want to have a different experience.'"

Wojcicki also confirmed rumours that YouTube is working on a streaming music and video service that could compete with the likes of Pandora and Spotify. – AFP



Singer Rihanna attends amfAR's fifth annual Inspiration Gala in Los Angeles at Milk Studios in Hollywood on October 29. Photo: AFP/Robyn Beck

NEW YORK



Junior ravers take over The VIP Room in Manhattan on October 26. Photo: Jewel Samad/AFP

Kids go clubbing

JENNIE MATTHEW

THE music's thumping, the dance floor's packed and the bar's bustling. Welcome to one of New York's hottest nightclubs and a new generation of clubbers: six-year-olds.

The VIP Room threw open its doors to children aged six to 12 on a Sunday afternoon to give them a taste of the nightclub, electronic music and dance scene in New York's uber trendy Meatpacking District.

Among those hitting the decks was eight-year-old DJ Alden. Kids swarmed onto the dance floor, bopping up and down to beats with proud moms shimmying alongside or snapping pictures.

"It was awesome!" said Alden, son of the organisers who jumped on the decks during the four-hour, Halloween-themed party. "The best thing was when I was in the DJ booth, DJing for everybody."

A dancer dressed as a robot with LED lights on his legs, arms, head and body took to the podium to whip up the crowd. When he starts shooting dry ice from two white guns, they go wild.

The children scream with pleasure, reaching up their hands as the robot takes them through basic dance steps, getting them to feel the beat.

More than 300 people, including

parents and younger siblings, attended the party organised by a husband-and-wife team whose company CirKiz opens top New York clubs to children once a month.

"I love it. My daughter's having a great time," said Laura Lampert, a legal secretary from Harlem dressed in a leopard-print dress with cat ears, pointing out her child twirling to the side.

"It's a lot of fun. It's also safe for the kids. It's during the day, and they get to feel like grown-ups," she said.

While parents sit back with a beer or vodka from the bar, children get a taste of the DJ booth – they are encouraged to touch the equipment and dabble in a spot of mixing.

Natalie Elizabeth Weiss DJs at the children's club sessions and thinks they are a brilliant way of opening young minds.

"It's giving us a chance to get back to our roots as humans, which is get together and dance to music," she told AFP.

She gives DJ lessons to children as young as three months, which have gone viral among trendy families across New York.

There has been interest as far afield as South Korea, Berlin and Los Angeles. Weiss plans masterclasses in Atlanta and Orlando, and she flies next month to Taiwan to initiate the program there.

But the parties are the brainchild of Jesse Sprague, a DJ who has

worked on the club scene for 20 years, and his wife Jenny Song. They say the raves are great fun for a child.

"They get to come into a really cool space, socialise with their friends, get away from televisions, iPads and tablets, and come in and experience something that has a very cool vibe," said Sprague.

"One of the mission statements is that we want to inspire kids to pursue things that are artistic. It helps to develop a creative mind, having the kids be in a stimulating sensory environment."

The couple got the idea after throwing their son's first birthday party at New York club Cielo. Friends had such a good time that they urged the couple to turn it into a business.

In concession to the tender age of clubbers, they keep the volume in check, screen songs for content and restrict ravers to cupcakes instead of cocktails.

Pier Singh, dressed up as a Candy Corn Witch in tight trousers, high-heeled ankle boots and a spangly top, struts onto the dance floor with two-year-old son Nico in a New York police uniform.

Older brother Miles, six, is Spider-Man and likes to break-dance. Singh saw the party advertised on Facebook and knew it would be the perfect family outing.

"I think it's really awesome," said Singh. "What kid doesn't love dancing these days," she laughs. – AFP

Street Seen

Waiting for customers at the 38th Street market. Photo: Yu Yu



BOSS

HUGO BOSS



The First HUGO BOSS Shop-in-Shop to Land in Myanmar

Myanmar. 26th October, 2014. HUGO BOSS is delighted to announce the launch of its first Shop-in-Shop in Myanmar on 26th October, 2014. Located in THE AVENUE, a renowned Myanmar shopping destination, the new store features a full lineup of BOSS collection. BOSS, a refined and sophisticated line of contemporary classics for business an elegant occasions, is widely celebrated for its clean design, superior fabric and meticulous attention to detail. THE AVENUE will introduce the clothing, sportswear and accessories collections of BOSS.

The HUGO BOSS Group is one of the most prominent luxurious brands in the world of premium women's and men's fashion. The brand offers an extensive product range consisting of classic-modern business wear, elegant evening wear and sportswear, shoes and leather accessories and licensed fragrances, eyewear, watches and other exquisite items, while showcasing its captivating creations in the world's most high profile fashion events. The Group boasts a prominent presence worldwide. This extensive network helps shape BOSS as one of the most renowned lines that offers a comprehensive portfolio.

The cocktail event on 26th October, 2014 was hosted, who was joined by celebrities decked out in Boss Fall 2014 Collection.

The BOSS Fall/Winter 2014 Collection draws its inspiration from the Scandinavian classic and mingles it with BOSS's DNA to create an effortless elegance that embodies natural minimalism without compromising a single detail in each stitch. Its Scandinavian architectural origin is evidenced by the contemporary, avant-garde yet understated pieces that are easy carry. They include a double-breast boxy jacket, pinstripe suit, brown turtleneck and a printed tuxedo jacket alongside other work-wear stemming from the same casual lux spirit. Its motif of naturalness is elaborated through straightforward color palette inspired by arctic landscapes. The accessories also inherit the same set codes to give a functional easiness.

Please visit the shop at THE AVENUE at NO.18 A, Kohmin Kohchin Road, (KaBarAye Pagoda Road), Yangon. Further information on the HUGO BOSS brand can be found our website www.hugoboss.com.



Aspiring girl-band members wanted

CHIT SU WAI
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MYANMAR is set to get another girl band. Rize Entertainment plans to launch a 100-member group to promote across Asia, said Moe The Cho, manager of the Japan-Myanmar company.

It plans to train young Myanmar women aged 18 to 25 and is accepting applications now from all who are interested.

"Although there will be 100 members in the group, we will divide into many subgroups such as AKB48 has done with success in Japan and worldwide. They will all be able to sing and dance," Moe The Cho said.

The girl band AKB48 was formed with 48 members and now lists 140.

The band Rize plans to form will make an album in Myanmar language. Applications for auditions will be accepted until November 7, with the audition date scheduled for November 10.

Selected performers will sign a contract with Rize and receive free training for eight months from established Japanese artists.

After that they will be expected to go on tour with the group. If a trainee declines to go, they will owe the company K10 million - so performers best check the rules and regulations of the contracts carefully.

The contest has already created a buzz among prospective candidates.

"I want to be a dancer, and I think this is the opportunity for me to be popular not only in Myanmar but also worldwide," said Wit Ye Phy, 19.

Applications are available at Rize Entertainment, 1st floor, 205 Yuzana Tower, Bahan.

Living Well in Myanmar

Keep fit to reduce cancer risk

CHRISTOPH GELSDORF, MD



livingwellmyanmar@gmail.com

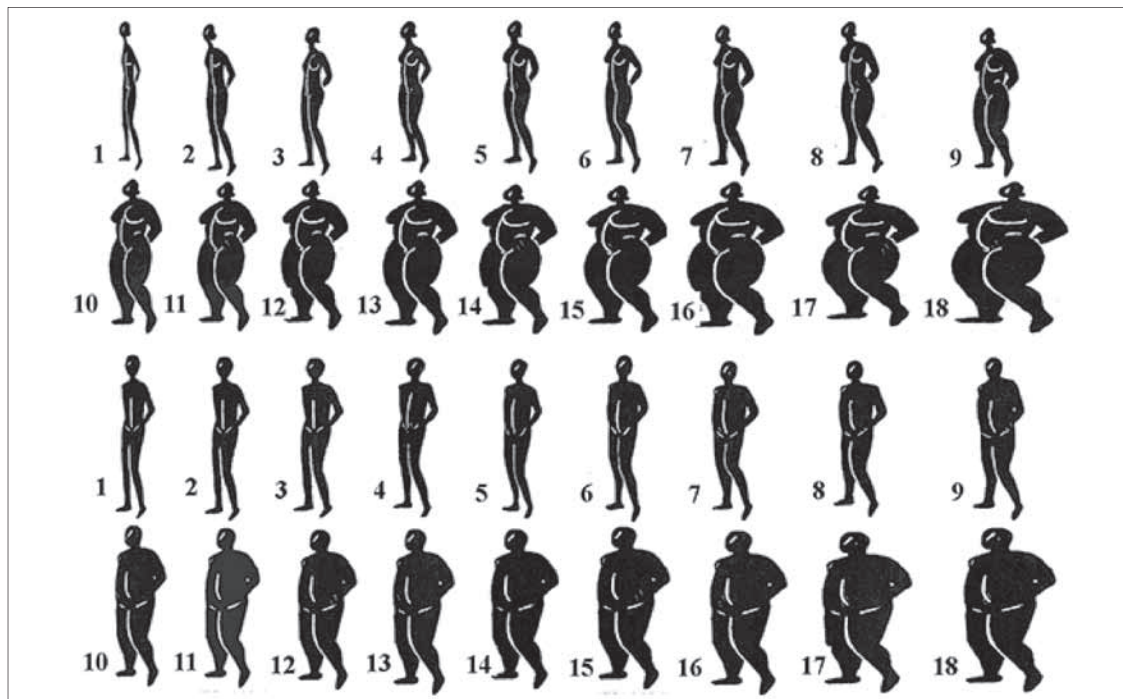
THE most recent edition of *Living Well in Myanmar* offered five guiding lifestyle principles for avoiding a heart attack. By eating well, exercising, maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking and drinking alcohol in moderation, you can greatly reduce your chance of running into heart troubles. But can those behaviours also help with other areas of your health?

We have evidence, of varying quality, that exercise reduces your risk of Alzheimer's disease, not smoking reduces your risk of stroke, and eating well lowers your risk of diabetes.

What about a healthy weight? Besides the obvious advantage of things like reduced joint pain and cholesterol levels, what other benefits does keeping off the pounds provide?

Increasingly in recent years, medical evidence has suggested that being overweight is linked to developing cancer over the course of a lifetime. A study published in the journal *The Lancet* a few months ago gives us greater insight into how strong the relationship between extra pounds and malignancy might be.

The authors reviewed medical records from general practitioners working in the UK and assembled data on more than 5 million patients over seven years. They found that for each 5-point increase in BMI there was a linear increase in the occurrence of many types of cancer. (BMI is a standardised measure of body fat based on weight and height. A 5-point increase in BMI is around 15 kilograms, or 33 pounds.)



Weight categories illustrated from underweight to obese. Figures 6-9 represent normal. Image: Ettarh R et al

The biggest dangers were identified for uterine cancer (62 percent increased risk), gallbladder cancer (31pc increased risk), kidney cancer (25pc increased risk) and liver cancer (19pc increased risk). Overweight people also had more colon, thyroid, cervical, ovarian, breast and leukemic cancers.

The researchers concluded that in the UK an annual 12,000 extra cases of cancer occur simply because people are overweight. This compounds the already heavy burden that obesity places on national health care systems.

In Myanmar we don't have the same levels of obesity-related complications as in many Western nations - yet. Anecdotally most general practitioners I work with in

Yangon say there is a growing trend in excessive weight gain among their patients. It's also safe to say the general population underappreciates the dangers of being overweight. And at the moment it may well be more dangerous to be obese in Myanmar than in a developed country. This is because the current lack of accessible, reliable and well-regulated medical care makes it unlikely that an overweight person can access the risk-reduction screenings and interventions that they need. A strong case can be made that preventing obesity is more important in Myanmar than in many other countries.

The physiologic mechanism by which extra weight leads to cancer is poorly understood. Also, there

appears to be significant variation in how much obesity contributes to each cancer type and at what weight levels the danger begins to increase. But despite the lack of clear scientific explanations or guidelines, we can now be certain that maintaining a healthy weight reduces cancer risk, and the best way to do that is by choosing a healthy mix of foods, avoiding excessive calories and leading an active lifestyle.

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Christoph Gelsdorf is an American Board of Family Medicine physician who sees patients in Yangon and California (www.gelsdorfMD.com). He is an honorary member of the Myanmar General Practitioner Society. Reader thoughts and questions are welcomed.

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Try these eggcellent nibbles for kids

EGGs are good when you cook them right, and people say that's easy to do. But you have to know what you're doing first. I often make egg dishes whenever I have guests with little kids over for brunch. They want to eat the same thing the adults are eating, not from separate plates. So the easiest dish that all will enjoy is an egg dish.

One recipe is for marble eggs flavoured with tea and soy. These can be served as a garnish on rice dishes or with barbecue or meat stew. You can do tea flavours only or soy flavours only or both. The colour of the tea and soy marks the egg whites through cracked shells so they appear "marbled".

The second recipe is from my mum – one of our family favourites. I have updated it a little. Whenever my mum cooked this curry, my sisters and I would constantly be in the kitchen, nibbling. She would find there were not enough egg slices to

serve at lunch time and we'd be in trouble. Still, we never learned to stop nibbling.

MARBLE EGGS

- 6 eggs
- ½ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup water
- 2 star anise
- 2 slices ginger
- 1 ½ tbsp tea leaves

Place eggs in a sauce pan and add enough water to cover. Boil on medium heat. As soon as the water bubbles, simmer for 5 minutes. Take out the eggs and let cool. Tap the shells with the back of a spoon. Let the shells break a bit while remaining attached to the egg. Put the eggs back in the water, adding all the remaining ingredients to the pan. Simmer for 15 minutes. Transfer the eggs to a bowl and let cool. Peel off the shells (under cold running water if you need to). Serve with chilli sauce or fresh sour-and-spicy sauce.

food



PHYO ARBIDANS
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Photos: Phyo



DAW PHYU PHYU'S SWEET EGG CURRY
• 6 eggs
• 1 tbsp soy sauce

- 6 cloves garlic (medium size)
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp ground white pepper

In a sauce pan, add the eggs and water to cover them. Boil on medium heat for 8 minutes. Turn the heat off and leave them in the hot water for 2-3 minutes. Transfer them to a bowl filled with cold water. When they are cool enough to handle, peel the shells off and cut them into 4 slices. Mix the soy sauce and sugar in a bowl and set aside.

Add the vegetable oil to a non-stick frying pan and heat it on medium. Sauté the garlic. As soon as the aroma of the garlic comes out, remove the pan from the stove. Add the soy sauce mixture to the pan with care. Please note that if the oil is hot, it could spit. Place the sliced eggs, cooked whites facing down, in the sauce. Cover with a lid and put back on the stove. Simmer for 5 minutes. Turn the eggs and remove them from the stove. Serve with rice or as an appetizer or nibbles.

Restaurant Review

In Mandalay, offshoot of popular Yangon pub offers casual diners a step up from the beer station

ANNE CRUICKSHANK

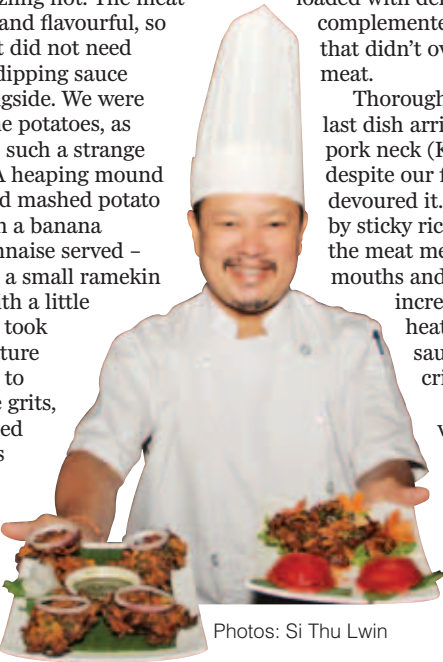
GINKI Kids has been a fixture on the Yangon bar scene for more than 15 years. Tucked away in Golden Valley, it draws a mixed crowd of young Burmese who come to socialise over a few cocktails, families who come for dinner and the occasional expat who comes for the familiar pub-style vibe. I, for one, loved going there as it was laid back, with great food and good people-watching. In Mandalay, dinner and drinks means "beer station", and there is certainly no shortage of them around. But Ginki Kids owner U Aung Kywe thought that Mandalay residents might be ready for something new. And he was right. Open for only a week, with no sign out front to indicate the restaurant, Ginki's garden was full when I arrived with my friends. The non-smoking inside dining area was inviting with a high wood ceiling, minimal but tasteful decoration and glass walls. But since the cool winter temperatures had just set in, we wanted to sit outside. After a drink (large Myanmar K2000; cocktails starting at K2500) on the U-shaped lounge sofa on the patio, a table came available in the garden. The food menu is the same as in Yangon plus several Indian dishes. My friends, who had not visited either

Ginki before, left the ordering up to me. I chose a few items that were popular at the original restaurant and some that were new to me. We were not disappointed. Every dish was fresh, tasty and just the right size. From the starters we ordered the chicken satay (K5000) and the bizarre but owner-recommended mashed potatoes with mayonnaise (K3000). Five large satay sticks showed up at the table sizzling hot. The meat was succulent and flavourful, so much so that it did not need the soy-based dipping sauce that came alongside. We were intrigued by the potatoes, as it sounded like such a strange combination. A heaping mound of finely ground mashed potato came served on a banana leaf, the mayonnaise served – thankfully – in a small ramekin on the side. With a little trepidation we took a bite – the texture was more akin to American-style grits, but we all agreed the flavour was great. The food kept getting better from there. We had two vegetable

dishes (*kailan* with mushrooms in oyster sauce K3000; fried Japan tofu with vegetables K3500) which, like the satay, came to the table with steam rising off of them. The vegetables were fresh and rich in colour and flavour. Of the several soft-shelled crab items on the menu, we opted for the fried soft crab with black pepper and vegetables (K6000), which was loaded with delicious crabs and complemented by a nice sauce that didn't overpower the crab meat. Thoroughly stuffed, our last dish arrived – spicy grilled pork neck (K5000) – and despite our full bellies we devoured it. Accompanied by sticky rice with sesame, the meat melted in our mouths and the flavours were incredible – a bit of heat from the chillis, sautéed onions and crispy ground rice. Whilst the food was incredible, and we appreciated that it was served hot, our only complaint was that it was brought out one or two

plates at a time. The lag between service was not terrible but the timing could be improved. Aside from that, Ginki Kids Mandalay gets high marks all around, and I'm sure

it will quickly become one of the top dining spots in Mandalay. And, given that it's a five-minute drive from my office, I will certainly be a frequent visitor.



Photos: Si Thu Lwin



Restaurant Rating
★★★★★

Ginki Kids

71st Street on the corner of 28th Street, Mandalay
Open 10:30am-11pm daily

Food	10
Drinks	8
Service	7
Value for money	9
X-factor	8



Cat, Ben, Kelly and Adam



Rodolf Lesser, Lesley Abraham, Erleno Falch and Helile Skela



Bhattarai and Pokhrel's family



Marcel, Edwin and Carsten



Kyaw Myat Chit, Phong Phong, Aung Thiha and Wutti

Union Bar celebrates reopening

The popular bar and grill welcomed back customers on October 23 after being temporarily shut for renovations and a menu update. Guests enjoyed free-flow drinks and snacks all evening long.



Sai, Brice, Steven and Charlie

Festival screens classic films

The Memory! Reprise Film Festival gave local moviegoers a chance to watch classics from around the globe at Nay Pyi Taw Cinema October 28-November 2. The festival opened with Charlie Chaplin's *The Circus*, celebrating 100 years since the creation of the famous "Tramp".



Lera and Emily



Alex and his friends



Haymar, Aye Mi San, Brice, Jeremy, Steven, Zin Nwe and Charlotte



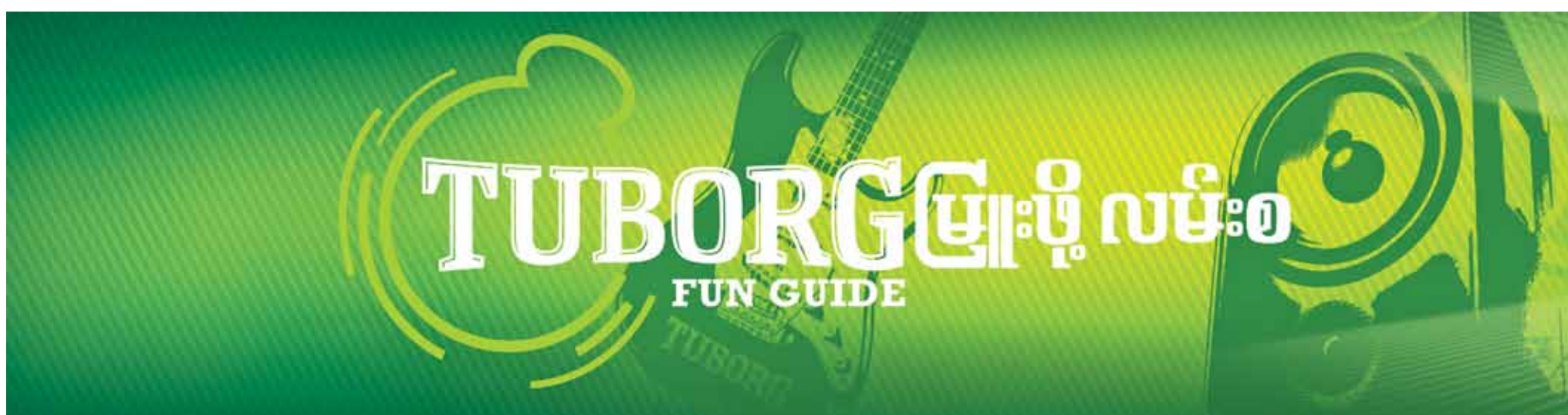
Sarah and Sonya



Aung Pyae, Soe Zayar and Soe Yarzar

IFB hosts another Friday party

On October 24, the Institute Francais held the fifth event in its series "French Love Friday" with an open-air party and electronic music.





Turkey celebrates 91st anniversary
The Embassy of Turkey celebrated 91 years of its Republic at Chatrium Hotel on October 29.



Jessica



Alvi Hakim, Jasmeet Singh and Jogeshwar Maini



Ko Nyan Thar, Jeremy and Nichole



Simon and Khin Thandar



Jerome Buzenet and Daw Thida Aye

DFDL marks 20 years

Law firm DFDL celebrated its 20th anniversary with a party at l'Alchemiste attended by CEOs, ambassadors and members of the media on October 22.



William D Greenlee Jr, Tobat Hall, Adeana Greenlee and Mark Hampson



Ma Ni Ni Oo and Ma Ei Phyu Win



DFDL staff



Adeana Shendal Greenlee and Mark D'Atelio



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FUN GUIDE

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DOMESTIC FLIGHT SCHEDULES

YANGON TO NAY PYI TAW				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
FMI A1	1,2,3,4,5	7:15	8:15	
FMI B1	1,2,3,4,5	10:45	11:45	
FMI C1	1,2,3,4,5	17:00	18:00	

YANGON TO MANDALAY				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 111	Daily	5:50	7:55	
7Y 133	2,5,7	5:55	8:00	
YH 909	1,2,3,4,7	6:00	7:40	
K7 262	Daily	6:00	8:10	
YH 917	5	6:00	7:40	
YH 917	1,2,3,4,6,7	6:10	8:30	
6T 401	2,3,4,5,6,7	6:20	8:30	
YH 633	2	6:30	8:10	
YH 831	4,6	7:00	8:40	
W9 201	Daily	7:00	8:25	
YH 835	1	7:00	12:55	
K7 266	Daily	8:00	10:05	
K7 244	1,3,5,6,7	8:15	9:40	
7Y 815	3	10:30	11:55	
7Y 813	7	10:30	11:55	
7Y 707	2,5	10:30	14:45	
7Y 815	1,4,6	10:30	14:45	
YH 911	2	11:00	12:40	
YH 727	1	11:15	13:25	
YH 729	2,4,6	11:15	14:15	
YH 737	3,7	11:15	13:25	
W9 251	2,5	11:30	12:55	
YH 737	5	11:30	13:40	
YH 835	7	11:30	13:10	
YH 829	5	12:30	14:10	
K7 822	2,4,7	12:30	16:55	
YJ 151/W9 7151	1,3,6	13:00	16:45	
K7 622	1,3,5,7	13:00	14:25	
K7 226	2,4,6	13:30	14:55	
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	14:30	16:35	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,6,7	15:00	17:10	
7Y 221	Daily	15:00	16:55	
YJ 211/W9 7211	7	15:30	16:55	
W9 211	4	15:30	16:55	
YH 731	5	15:30	17:40	
6T 501	Daily	15:30	17:35	

YANGON TO NYAUNG U				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 111	Daily	5:50	7:10	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	5:55	7:15	
K7 262	Daily	6:00	7:20	
YH 917	5	6:00	8:25	
YH 909	1,2,3,4,7	6:00	8:25	
YH 917	1,2,3,4,6,7	6:10	7:45	
YH 909	5	6:10	7:45	
YJ 141/W9 7141	Daily	6:20	7:40	
6T 401	2,3,4,5,6,7	6:20	7:40	
6T 401	1	6:20	7:40	
YH 917	1	6:30	8:05	
YH 909	6	6:30	8:05	
YH 633	3,7	6:30	8:05	
K7 242	Daily	7:00	8:20	
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	14:30	17:25	
YH 731	1,2,3,4,6,7	15:00	17:55	
K7 264	Daily	15:00	17:10	
7Y 221	Daily	15:00	17:40	
YJ 129/W9 7129	2,5	15:30	17:35	
W9 129	1,3,6	15:30	17:35	
6T 501		15:30	18:25	
YH 731	5	15:30	18:25	

YANGON TO MYITKYINA				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 835	1	7:00	9:40	
YH 831	4,6	7:00	10:35	
YH 835	7	11:30	14:35	
W9 251	2,5	11:30	14:25	
YH 829	5	12:30	15:35	
YJ 151/W9 7151	1,3,6	13:00	15:15	
K7 622	1,3,5,7	13:00	15:55	
YH 826	3	14:00	16:40	

YANGON TO HEHO				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 111	Daily	5:50	8:40	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	5:55	8:10	
7Y 133	2,5,7	5:55	8:45	
K7 262	Daily	6:00	9:55	

NAY PYI TAW TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
FMI A2	1,2,3,4,5	8:35	9:35	
FMI B2	1,2,3,4,5	13:30	14:30	
FMI C2	1,2,3,4,5	18:20	19:20	

MANDALAY TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 910	1,2,3,4,7	7:40	9:45	
7Y 112	Daily	8:10	10:05	
YH 634	2	8:10	10:15	
7Y 134	2,5,7	8:15	10:10	
K7 262	Daily	8:25	12:25	
YH 918	1,2,3,4,6,7	8:30	10:45	
W9 201	Daily	8:40	10:35	
6T 402	2,3,4,5,6,7	8:45	10:50	
YH 918	5	9:10	11:05	
K7 244	1,3,5,6,7	9:55	13:00	
K7 267	Daily	10:20	12:25	
YH 738	7	13:25	17:50	
YH 832	6	13:50	15:15	
YH 832	4	14:50	16:25	
7Y 816	1,4,6	15:00	18:45	
7Y 708	2,5	15:00	19:18	
YH 912	2	15:30	17:25	
YH 836	1	15:45	17:10	
7Y 814	7	16:00	17:25	
7Y 816	3	16:40	18:05	
YH 728	1	16:45	18:10	
K7 225/7Y 242	Daily	16:50	19:00	
YH 738	5	16:55	19:05	
YH 830	5	17:00	18:25	
YJ 152/W9 7152	1,3,6	17:05	18:30	
YJ 211/W9 7211	7	17:10	19:15	
W9 211	4	17:10	19:15	
7Y 222	Daily	17:10	19:15	
K7 823	2,4,7	17:10	18:35	
YH 732	1,2,3,4,6,7	17:10	19:15	
K7 227	2,4,6	17:20	18:45	
YH 738	3	17:25	18:50	
K7 623	1,3,5,7	17:40	19:05	
YH 836	7	17:50	19:15	
6T 502	Daily	17:50	20:00	
YH 732	5	17:40	19:45	
YH 730	2,4,6	18:00	19:25	
W9 252	2,5	18:15	19:40	

NYAUNG U TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 111	Daily	7:25	10:05	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	7:30	10:30	
YH 918	1,2,3,4,6,7	7:45	10:45	
YJ 141/W9 7141	Daily	7:55	10:55	
6T 401	2,3,4,5,6,7	7:55	10:50	
YH 910	6	8:05	9:25	
YH 634	3,7	8:05	10:10	
6T 401	1	8:10	10:35	
YH 910	1,2,3,4,7	8:25	9:45	
YH 918	5	8:25	11:05	
K7 242	Daily	8:35	11:45	
YH 910	5	9:35	10:55	
K7 263	Daily	11:05	12:25	
K7 265	Daily	17:25	18:45	
K7 225/7Y 242	Daily	17:40	19:00	
YJ 129/W9 7129	2,5	17:50	19:10	
W9 129	1,3,6	17:50	19:10	
YH 732	1,2,3,4,6,7	17:55	19:15	
7Y 222	Daily	17:55	19:15	
YH 732	5	18:25	19:45	
6T 502	Daily	18:40	20:00	

MYITKYINA TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 832	6	12:25	15:15	
YH 832	4	13:25	16:25	
YH 836	1	14:20	17:10	
YJ 152/W9 7152	1,3,6	15:35	18:30	
YH 830	5	15:35	18:25	
K7 623	1,3,5,7	16:10	19:05	
YH 836	7	16:25	19:15	
YH 827	3	16:40	19:05	
W9 252	2,5	16:45	19:40	

HEHO TO YANGON				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 242	1,3,4,6	8:25	10:30	
YH 910	5	8:40	10:55	
YJ 141/W9 7141	Daily	8:50	10:55	
7Y 112	Daily	8:55	10:05	

YH 917	5	6:00	9:55
YH 917	1,2,3,4,6,7	6:10	9:35
YH 909	5	6:10	8:40
YJ 141/W9 7141	Daily	6:20	8:35
6T 401	2,3,4,5,6,7	6:20	9:20
6T 401	1	6:20	8:50
YH 917	1	6:30	9:00
YH 633	3,7	6:30	9:00
YH 633	2	6:30	9:05
K7 242	Daily	7:00	9:15
W9 201	Daily	7:00	9:10
K7 266	Daily	8:00	9:15
K7 244	1,3,5,6,7	8:15	10:30
7Y 815	3	10:30	12:40
7Y 813	7	10:30	12:40
7Y 815	1,4,6	10:30	14:00
7Y 241	2	10:35	11:45
YH 505	1,2,3,4,6	10:30	11:55
YH 911	2	11:00	16:15
6T 351	6	11:15	12:30
YH 727	1	11:15	12:40
YH 737	3,7	11:15	12:40
YH 505	5	11:30	12:55
YH 737	5	11:30	12:55
YH 505	6	11:30	12:55
K7 828	1,3,5	12:30	13:45
K7 822	2,4,7	12:30	13:45
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	14:30	15:45
YH 731	1,2,3,4,6,7	15:00	16:25
K7 264	Daily	15:00	16:25
7Y 221	Daily	15:00	16:10
YJ 129/W9 7129	2,5	15:30	16:40
W9 129	1,3,6	15:30	16:40
6T 501	Daily	15:30	16:45
YH 731	5	15:30	16:55

YANGON TO MYEIK				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 633	3,7	7:00	9:15	
K7 319	2,4,6	7:00	9:05	

YANGON TO SITTWE				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 445	3,4,6	11:00	12:50	
6T 605	1,2,3,4,5,7	11:15	13:10	
YJ 309/W9 7309	5	11:30	12:55	
W9 309	1,3,6	11:30	12:55	
K7 422	Daily	13:00	14:55	

YANGON TO THANDWE				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 241	1,3,4,6	5:55	9:25	
YJ 141/W9 7141	Daily	6:20	9:50	
K7 242	Daily	7:00	10:35	
K7 244	1,3,5,6,7	8:15	11:50	
YH 505	1,2,3,4,6	10:30	13:10	
7Y 241	2	10:35	13:00	
7Y 445	3,4,6	11:00	11:50	
6T 351	6	11:15	13:50	
6T 605	1,2,3,4,5,7	11:15	12:10	
YJ 311/W9 7311	4	11:30	13:20	
W9 311	2,7	11:30	13:20	
YJ 309/W9 7309	5	11:30	13:50	
W9 309	1,3,6	11:30	13:50	
YH 505	5	11:30	14:10	
K7 422	Daily	13:00	13:35	

YANGON TO DAWEI				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 633	5	6:30	7:55	
K7 319	2,4,6	7:00	8:10	

YANGON TO LASHIO				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 707	2,5	10:30	12:08	
YH 729	2,4,6	11:15	13:15	
K7 828	1,3,5	12:30	14:50	

YANGON TO PUTAO				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
YH 831	6	7:00	11:30	
YH 835	1	7:00	10:35	
W9 251	2,5	11:30	15:25	
YH 835	7	11:30	15:30	

YANGON TO CHIANG MAI				
Flight	Days	Dep	Arr	
7Y 305	1,5	11:00	12:50	
W9 9607	4,7	14:30	16:20	

7Y 134	2,5,7	9:00	10:10
YH 634	3,7	9:00	10:10
YH 634	2	9:05	10:15
6T 402	1	9:20	10:35
W9 201	Daily	9:25	10:35
K7 243	Daily	9:30	11:45
YH 918	1,2,3,4,6,7	9:35	10:45
6T 402	2,3,4,5,6,7	9:35	10:50
YH 918	5	9:55	11:05
K7 263	Daily	10:10	12:25
K7 245	1,3,5,6,7	10:45	13:00
K7 267	Daily	11:10	12:25
YH 506	1,2,3,4,6	11:55	14:00
7Y 241	2	12:00	14:05
6T 352	6	12:45	15:00
YH 506	5	12:55	15:00
7Y 816	1,4,6	14:15	18:45
7Y 813	7	15:15	17:25
7Y 816	3	15:55	18:05
YH 728	1	16:00	18:10
K7 224/7Y 241	Daily	16:00	19:00
K7 829	1,3,5	16:10	17:25
YH 912	2	16:15	17:25
K7 823	2,4,7	16:20	18:35
7Y 221	Daily	16:25	19:15
YH 732	1,2,3,4,6,7	16:25	19:15
K7 264	Daily	16:30	18:45
YH 738	7	16:40	17:50
YH 738	3	16:40	18:50
YJ 129/W9 7129	2,5	16:55	19:10
W9 129	1,3,6	16:55	19:10
YH 732	5	16:55	19:45
6T 501	Daily	17:00	20:00
YH 738	5	17:40	19:05

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULES

YANGON TO BANGKOK			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
PG 706	Daily	6:15	8:30
8M 335	Daily	7:40	9:25
TG 304	Daily	9:50	11:45
PG 702	Daily	10:30	12:25
TG 302	Daily	14:55	16:50
PG 708	Daily	15:20	17:15
8M 331	Daily	16:30	18:15
PG 704	Daily	18:20	20:15
TG 306	Daily	19:45	21:45

YANGON TO DON MUEANG			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
DD 4231	Daily	8:00	9:50
FD 252	Daily	8:30	10:15
FD 254	Daily	17:30	19:10
DD 4239	Daily	21:00	22:45

YANGON TO SINGAPORE			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
Y5 233	Daily	10:10	14:40
SQ 997	Daily	10:35	15:10
3K 582	Daily	11:20	15:50
8M 231	Daily	12:45	17:10
MI 533	4,6	13:45	20:50
MI 517	Daily	16:40	21:15
TR 2827	Daily	19:05	23:40

YANGON TO KUALA LUMPUR			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 501	1,5	7:50	11:50
AK 505	Daily	8:30	12:50
MH 741	Daily	12:15	16:30
8M 9506	Daily	12:15	16:30
8M 9508	Daily	15:45	20:05
MH 743	Daily	15:45	20:05
AK 503	4,6	19:30	23:45

YANGON TO BEIJING			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
CA 716	1,3,5,7	23:50	0550+1

YANGON TO GUANGZHOU			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 711	2,4,7	8:40	13:15
CZ 3056	3,6	11:25	16:15
CZ 3056	1,5	17:30	22:15

YANGON TO TAIPEI			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
Ci 7916	Daily	10:50	16:15

YANGON TO KUNMING			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
CA 906	Daily	12:15	15:55
MU 2012	3	12:20	18:25
MU 2032	1,2,4,5,6,7	14:50	18:20

YANGON TO HANOI			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
VN 956	1,3,5,6,7	19:10	21:30

YANGON TO HO CHI MINH CITY			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
VN 942	2,4,7	14:25	17:15

YANGON TO DOHA			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
QR 919	1,4,6	8:00	11:10

YANGON TO PHNOM PENH			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr

YANGON TO SEOUL			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
OZ 770	4,7	0:35	9:10
KE 472	Daily	23:35	7:50

YANGON TO HONG KONG			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
KA 251	Daily	01:10	05:45

YANGON TO TOKYO			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
NH 914	Daily	21:45	06:50+1

YANGON TO GAYA			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 601	3,5,6	7:00	8:20

YANGON TO DHAKA			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
BG 061	4	19:45	21:00
BG 061	1	21:45	23:00

YANGON TO INCHEON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 7702	Daily	23:35	8:05
8M7502	4,7	0:35	9:10

MANDALAY TO BANGKOK			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
PG 710	Daily	14:05	16:30

MANDALAY TO SINGAPORE			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
M 533	4,6	15:55	20:50
Y5 233	Daily	8:05	14:40

MANDALAY TO DON MUEANG			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
FD 245	1,2,4,6	12:45	15:00

MANDALAY TO KUNMING			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
MU 2030	Daily	14:40	17:30

MANDALAY TO GAYA			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 603	4	11:10	12:15

NAY PYI TAW TO BANGKOK			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
PG 722	1,2,3,4,5	19:30	22:30

BANGKOK TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
TG 303	Daily	7:55	8:50
PG 701	Daily	8:50	9:40
8M 336	Daily	10:40	11:25
TG 301	Daily	13:00	13:55
PG 707	Daily	13:40	14:30
PG 703	Daily	16:45	17:35
TG 305	Daily	17:50	18:45
8M 332	Daily	19:15	20:00
PG 705	Daily	20:15	21:30

DON MUEANG TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
DD 4230	Daily	6:20	7:05
FD 251	Daily	7:15	8:00
FD 253	Daily	16:20	17:00
DD 4238	Daily	19:30	20:15

SINGAPORE TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
SQ 998	Daily	7:55	9:20
3K 581	Daily	8:50	10:30
MI 533	4,6	11:35	12:55
MI 518	Daily	14:20	15:45
TR 2826	Daily	17:05	18:25
Y5 234	Daily	15:35	17:05
8M 232	Daily	18:15	19:40

KUALA LUMPUR TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
AK 504	Daily	6:55	8:00
MH 740	Daily	10:05	11:15
8M 9505	Daily	10:05	11:15
8M 502	1,5	12:50	13:50
8M 9507	Daily	13:30	14:40
MH 742	Daily	13:30	14:40
AK 502	Daily	17:50	19:00

BEIJING TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
CA 715	1,3,5,7	19:30	22:50

GUANGZHOU TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
CZ 3055	3,6	8:40	10:25
CZ 3055	1,5	14:40	16:30
8M 712	2,4,7	14:15	15:50

TAIPEI TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
Ci 7915	Daily	7:00	9:55

KUNMING TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
MU 2011	3	8:25	11:40
CA 905	Daily	10:45	11:15
MU 2031	1,2,4,5,6,7	13:30	14:00

HANOI TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
VN 957	1,3,5,6,7	16:50	18:10

HO CHI MINH CITY TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
VN 943	2,4,7	11:50	13:25

DOHA TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
QR 918	3,5,7	20:20	6:25+1

PHNOM PENH TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 9006	1,3,6	16:00	17:30

SEOUL TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
KE 471	Daily	18:45	22:35
OZ 769	3,6	19:50	23:25

HONG KONG TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
KA 250	Daily	21:45	23:30

TOKYO TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
NH 913	Daily	11:00	15:40

GAYA TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 602	3,5,6	9:20	12:30

DHAKA TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
BG 060	4	16:30	18:45
BG 060	1	18:30	20:45

INCHEON TO YANGON			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 7701	Daily	18:45	22:35
8M 7501	3,6	19:50	23:25

BANGKOK TO MANDALAY			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
PG 709	Daily	12:00	13:20

SINGAPORE TO MANDALAY			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
MI 533	4,6	11:35	15:00
Y5 234	Daily	15:35	18:55

DON MUEANG TO MANDALAY			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
FD 244	1,2,4,6	10:50	12:15

KUNMING TO MANDALAY			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
MU 2029	Daily	13:55	13:50
MU 7524	1,3,5	18:20	21:00

GAYA TO MANDALAY			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
8M 604	4	13:15	16:20

BANGKOK TO NAY PYI TAW			
Flights	Days	Dep	Arr
PG 721	1,2,3,4,5	17:00	19:00

International Airlines

Air Asia (FD) Tel: 09254049991-3
Air Bagan Ltd.(W9) Tel: 513322, 513422, 504888. Fax: 515102
Air China (CA) Tel: 666112, 655882
Air India Tel: 253597-98, 254758. Fax 248175
Bangkok Airways (PG) Tel: 255122, 255265. Fax: 255119
Biman Bangladesh Airlines (BG) Tel: 371867-68. Fax: 371869
Condor (DE) Tel: 370836-39 [ext: 303]
Dragonair (KA) Tel: 255320, 255321. Fax: 255329
Golden Myanmar Airlines (Y5) Tel: 09400446999, 09400447999 Fax: 8604051
Malaysia Airlines (MH) Tel: 387648, 241007 [ext: 120, 121, 122] Fax: 241124
Myanmar Airways International (8M) Tel: 255260. Fax: 255305
Nok Airline (DD) Tel: 255050, 255021. Fax: 255051
Qatar Airways (QR) Tel: 379845, 379843, 379831. Fax: 379730
Singapore Airlines (SQ) / Silk Air (MI) Tel: 255287-9. Fax: 255290
Thai Airways (TG) Tel: 255491-6. Fax: 255223
Tiger Airline (TR) Tel: 371383, 370836-39 [ext: 303]
Vietnam Airlines (VN) Tel: 255066, 255088, 255068. Fax: 255086

Airline Codes			
3K = Jet Star			
8M = Myanmar Airways International			
AK = Air Asia			
BG = Biman Bangladesh Airlines			
CA = Air China			
CI = China Airlines			
CZ = China Southern			
DD = Nok Airline			
FD = Air Asia			
KA = Dragonair			
KE = Korea Airlines			
MH = Malaysia Airlines			
MI = Silk Air			
MU = China Eastern Airlines			
NH = All Nippon Airways			
PG = Bangkok Airways			
QR = Qatar Airways			
SQ = Singapore Airways			
TG = Thai Airways			
TR = Tiger Airline			
VN = Vietnam Airline			
Y5 = Golden Myanmar Airlines			
Subject to change without notice			

Day	4 = Thursday
1 = Monday	5 = Friday
2 = Tuesday	6 = Saturday
3 = Wednesday	7 = Sunday



Singapore looms. Photo: Ramir Borja

Tigerair shares routes with Golden Myanmar

EI EI THU
91.eieithu@gmail.com

NO-FRILLS Singapore airline Tigerair is linking up with Golden Myanmar in a daily code-share flight from Singapore-Yangon-Singapore, GMA's chief operations officer U Khin Mg Myint told *The Myanmar Times*.

“We will sell the tickets and Tiger will contribute their flight. This will reduce costs,” he said.
Tiger is Singapore's largest no-frills carrier, flying to more than 90 destinations in the Asia Pacific region.

The company's commercial director, Robert Yang, said, “We look forward to an expansion of the code-share arrangement to other Myanmar destinations like Mandalay and Bagan.”
GMA is currently flying domestic routes, and also to Chiang Mai and Bangkok. The company is planning to add the route Yangon-Kunming in November, and from the end of this year will fly to Doha, said U Khin Mg Myint.
“From October 26 we run a direct flight to Bangkok before flying to Singapore. Ticket price is only US\$49 one-way,” he said.



GMA will add a Yangon-Kunming route in November. Photo: Steve Evans

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

DIET TIME By Peterson Lemon

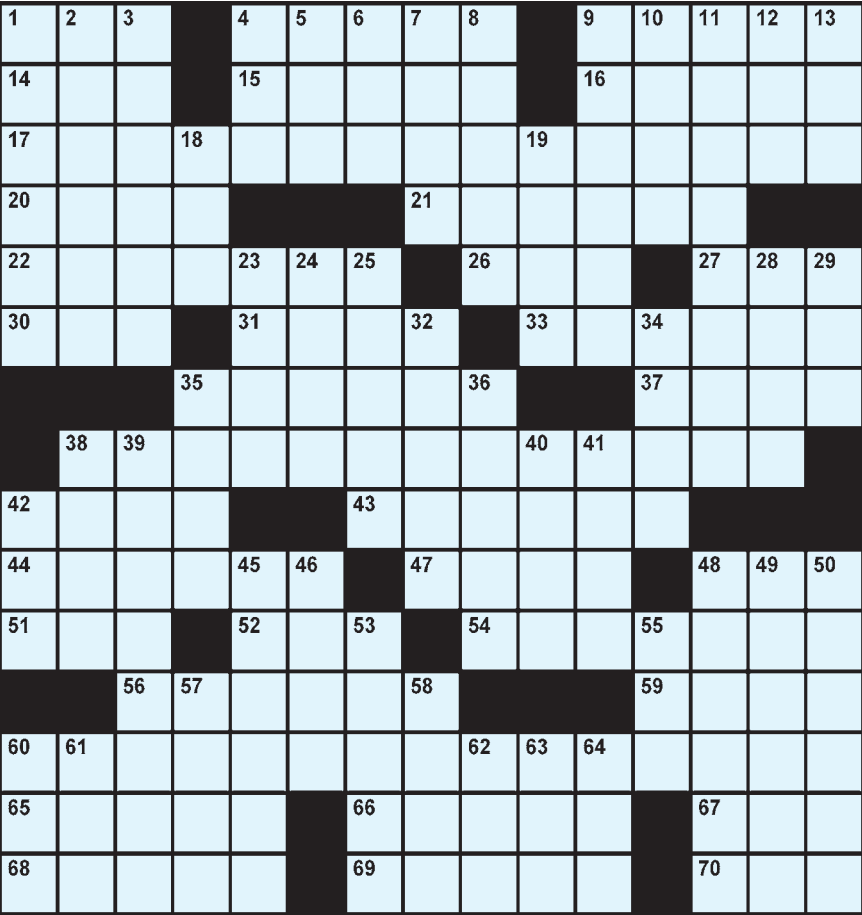
ACROSS

- 1 "Hold on a ___!"
- 4 Young seal
- 9 Like an eyebrow
- 14 Ex-heavyweight champ
- 15 Otherworldly
- 16 Native New Zealander
- 17 They're bringing up baby
- 20 Ireland, formerly
- 21 Pennsylvania state bird
- 22 Alp feature
- 26 Possess
- 27 Boozehound
- 30 Big ___ Conference
- 31 Husk relative
- 33 Bacon units
- 35 Head cases?
- 37 Eye part
- 38 Shocked
- 42 Popular brews
- 43 A name of God
- 44 Restore, as walls
- 47 "Nobody doesn't like ___ Lee"
- 48 Took a load off
- 51 Butter unit
- 52 Big galoot
- 54 Nerve impulse locale
- 56 Department store Neiman ___
- 59 Mussolini, aka "il ___"
- 60 Courageous males
- 65 "La ___" (Albert Camus novel)
- 66 "Peanuts" blanket-carrier
- 67 Anne's twins?
- 68 Some singing voices
- 69 Hunks of marble
- 70 Pig's digs

DOWN

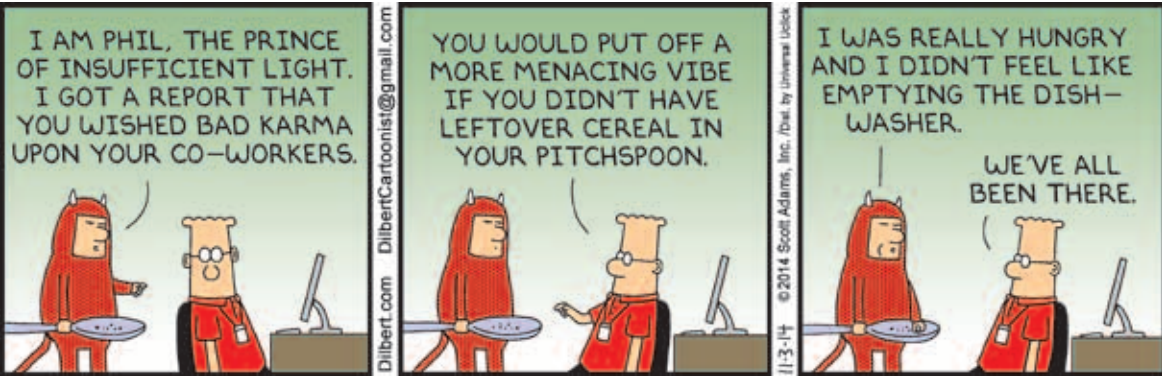
- 1 Least dangerous
- 2 "Seinfeld" gal
- 3 Fruit resembling a lemon
- 4 Diminutive
- 5 "... and sat down beside ___"

- 6 Historical time period
- 7 When doubled, a celebrated panda
- 8 California's San ___ Bay
- 9 Become (with "to")
- 10 Informers, in slang
- 11 Unified
- 12 Before, of yore
- 13 Board member (Abbr.)
- 18 Make cutting blows shorter?
- 23 Marathoner's gorge, briefly
- 24 Kuwaiti, e.g.
- 25 Like a forest of firs
- 28 Kind of column
- 29 Bag-inspecting org.
- 32 Bygone coins
- 34 "Babe" or "Baby" follower
- 35 Familia home
- 36 Turkish generals (Var.)
- 38 Dog biter
- 39 More liberal than all others
- 40 Wrong, as plans
- 41 Penn name?
- 42 Dada founder
- 45 Conqueror of Mexico
- 46 A head
- 48 Collection of minute bubbles
- 49 Trip to the top
- 50 Very small
- 53 Gasoline, kerosene, etc.
- 55 Go on to say
- 57 Ferrari, for one
- 58 Catamaran feature
- 60 Fitness facility
- 61 ___ Aviv
- 62 Biochemistry abbr.
- 63 Butter holder
- 64 Suffix with "lion"



DILBERT

BY SCOTT ADAMS



PEANUTS

BY CHARLES SCHULZ



CALVIN AND HOBBS

BY BILL WATTERSON

SUDOKU PACIFIC

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.



11/6

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

JEANS ARE COMFORTABLE

Solution: 7 letters



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11/3

Acid, American, Atari, Blue, Boot Cut, Brand, Casual, Cotton, Cowboys, Daisy, Davis, Denims, Designer, Dress, Dungaree, Durable, Dyeing, Fabric, Fashion, Flare, Garments, Indigo, Informal, Inseams, Jegging, Levi, Long, Loose, Narrow, Overall, Pants, Pockets, Relaxed, Rivets, Skinny, Skirt, Slacks, Slim, Stone, Trendy, Trousers, Wardrobe, Washes, Worn

To purchase WONDERWORD books for the holidays, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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The Essentials

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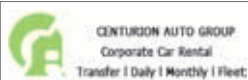
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Employment

UN Position

THE UNITED NATIONS World Food Programme, is seeking (1) **Communications & Reports Officer** NO-B, Yangon. <http://www.themimu.info/jobs-for-myanmar-nationals>. Please email the applications with UN P-11 to wfpmyanmar.vacancy@wfp.org COB 12 November 2014.

THE UNITED NATIONS World Food Program me, is seeking (1) **Programme Officer/ Head of Sub Office** (NOB), Kachin State. For more information, please visit to <http://www.themimu.info/jobs-for-myanmar-nationals>. Please email the applications with UN P-11 to wfpmyanmar.vacancy@wfp.org COB 11 November 2014.

THE UNITED NATIONS Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is seeking for Myanmar nationals: (1) **Programme Specialist** (HIV prevention & care) - NO-D, Fixed-Term Appointment (FTA), UNODC Country Office - 1 Post - Duty Station: Yangon : Advanced university degree in social sciences, public health or any other relevant discipline. 7 years of professional experience at the national level in managing HIV/AIDS prevention & care programmes among people who inject drugs and/or in prison settings. Technological awareness: Experience in the usage of computers & office software packages. Know ledge of and/or practical experience in the area of organisation and delivery of training programmes in the field of HIV/AIDS and drug dependence would be an asset. Well-developed communication skills to liaise, negotiate & advocate with key stakeholders including with other implementing agencies. Ability to write reports & reviews & conduct presentations by clearly formulating positions on issues & defending recommendations. Fluency in English. Application must include a cover letter, current CV, P11 form, copies of relevant academic qualification certificates & a recent passport photo to UNODC, 11A, Maylikha Rd, Ward-7, Mayangone, Yangon, Myanmar. (or) C/O UNDP, POBox (650), Yangon, Myanmar. or by email to: fo.myanmar@unodc.org (or) Jacqueline.PEEGYAW@unodc.org Closing Date: 7 November 2014.

THE UNITED NATIONS World Food Programme, is seeking (1) **Office Assistant/ Receptionist** GS-3, Yangon (2) **Programme Assistant** (VAM) GS-5, Hakha (Re-advertise). For more information, please visit to <http://www.themimu.info/jobs-for-myanmar-nationals>. Please email the applications with UN P-11 to wfpmyanmar.vacancy@wfp.org COB 7 November 2014.

Embassy Position

ROYAL EMBASSY of Cambodia is seeking **Secretary** 1 post. Interested persons should send an application letter with a current CV, 2 ID photos, recommendations letters and educational certificate copies. 25 (3B/4B) New University Avenue, Bahan, Yangon. Ph: 951-549-609, 540-964. Email: camemb.mmr@mfa.gov.kh

Ingo Position

WORLD CONCERN Myanmar is seeking (1) **Finance Manager** - 1 post (2) **Monitoring and Evaluation Manager** - 1 post in Yangon. Reporting to Country Director (3) **Program Area Manager** in Lashio Office, Shan Program. Reporting to Senior Program Coordinator. Interested local candidates should clearly indicate the post title with an updated CV to HR/Admin Department, World Concern Myanmar, No (477/479), Aye Yeikthar 2nd Lane, 6th & 7th Floors, New University Avenue Rd, Bahan or send to wcm.hr1@gmail.com, Ph. 01-401554, 01-557355. Closing Date : 15th November, 2014

(1) **COMMUNITY Based First Aid (CBFA) Training Officer** - 1 Post (2) **Communication Officer** - 1 Post (3) **Admin Assistant** (Malaria) 1 Post (4) **Livelihood Officer** - 2 Posts (5) **Logistics Officer** 1 Post (6) **Program Support Officer** - 1 Post. Please send application letter, CV & related documents to Myanmar Red Cross Society (Head Office) Yazatingaha Rd, Dekkhinathiri, NayPyiTaw. Ormrshrrecruitment@gmail.com www.myanmarredcrosssociety.org

GIZ is seeking **National Expert in Banking & Finance** 1 post in Yangon. Contract Period: 1st January 2015 – 31st December 2015 (Extendable). Qualifications : A University Degree in Economics, Business Administration, Banking or other relevant field; A minimum of three to five years working experience in the banking industry (national or international) or at another international organization working in a similar field; Be able to work independently & goal oriented; Have excellent communication, organizational and administration skills. Working experience in multi-cultural environments is a plus; Fluent in English and Myanmar language, including technical banking vocabulary; Very good computer skills. An established network to key stakeholders in the banking sector is a strong advantage. GIZ offers a competitive salary and a social benefits package. Please send application letter along with non-returnable recent CV and contact detail of two referees to Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH : 45, Inya Myaing Rd, Golden Valley (2) Ward, Bahan, Yangon, OR EMAIL: recruit-myanmar@giz.de Note: Please sent in Microsoft Word or PDF format.

(1) **FINANCE OFFICER** (OPP) - 1 Post. Please send application letter, CV & related documents to Myanmar Red Cross Society (Head Office) Yazatingaha Rd, Dekkhinathiri, NayPyiTaw. Ormrshrrecruitment@gmail.com www.myanmarredcrosssociety.org . (1) **DEPUTY MANAGER** (Finance & Admin) - 1 Post (2) **CSR Program Officer** 1 Post (3) **Admin Assistant** (Malaria) - 1 Post (4) **Engineer** - 2 Posts (Consultant for Renovation Health Facilities Assessment) (5) **Site Engineer** (Sun Rural Health Centre) - 2 Posts. Please send application letter, CV & related documents to Myanmar Red Cross Society (Head Office) Yazatingaha Rd, Dekkhinathiri, NayPyiTaw. Ormrshrrecruitment@gmail.com www.myanmarredcrosssociety.org

society.org
THE INT'L Rescue Committee (IRC) is seeking (1) **Project Officer** 1 post in Hpa-an, Kayin State: 3 years professional experience. Fluency in English. (2) **Project Coordinator** 1 post in Hpa-an, Kayin State: 5 years professional experience in related work, community mobilization. 3 years of experience. Fluency in English. (3) **Project Manager** - 1 post in Hpa-an : Degree in Law, Human Rights, social development, Governance or other related field. 3 years professional experience. Skilled in Excel, Word software. (4) **Liaison Officer** - 1 post in Hpa-an, Kayin State: University degree. 3 or more years experience in a similar position. Fluency in English. Skilled in Excel, Word software. Please submit a Cover letter & CV to the HR Department by email at: WaiMar.Naing@rescue.org or by delivery to the IRC office : 33/A, Natmauk Lane Thwe (1), Bocho (2) Quarter, Bahan, Yangon. Closing date: for 1 ~ 3: 4th November, for 4 : 5th November, 2014.

(1) **M & E Officer** (Child Protection) - 1 Post (2) **Logistics Assistant** (Mindat/Matupi) 2 Posts (3) **WASH / Watsan Specialist** 1 Post. (4) **Program Officer** (CBHFA) - 1 Post. Please send application letter, CV & related documents to Myanmar Red Cross Society (Head Office) Yazatingaha Rd, Dekkhinathiri, NayPyiTaw. Ormrshrrecruitment@gmail.com www.myanmarredcrosssociety.org

Local Positions

BELMOND Governors Residence is looking for (1) **Boutique Manager** (Able to handle the guest services and public relations, ability to check the stock , inventory as well as daily sales and holding a graduate or diploma degree, preferable in Boutique or Sales experience) Electrician & Technician for Maintenance Department (2) **SPA Therapist** (3) **Waiter / Waitress**. Belmond Shwe Kyet Yet Tour is looking for (1) **Tour Desk Sales** (2) **Ticketing Officer** (3) **Reservations Officer** . Kindly contact to Human Resources for the above opening positions. Tel : 229860 Email : ayeaye.linn@belmond.com

ALL ACCESS Myanmar Co., Ltd. is seeking (1) **Proficient Japanese Language Graduates** - M/F (2) **Marketing Staff** -

M. Please submit CV with necessary documents to Rm (GA-2), Building No. C, Pearl Condo, Kabaaye Pagoda Rd, Bahan. Tel : (95) 11 222 638, (95) 9 250 893 969

GREAT GOLDEN Glory Co., Ltd is seeking (1) **Technical Sales Representative** - M/F 1 post : B.E.(Chemical) or B.Sc (Chemistry, IC or Microbiology), Age 25 ~ 35 years, Fluent in English, Good computer skill, Experience in Food & beverage industries is an advantage. (2) **Assistance Accountant F** - 1 post : BA.Eco or B.Com, LCCI (Level 1, 2), Age 25 ~ 30 years, Fluent in English, Good computer skill, 1 year experience in related field is advantage. Please submit CV with necessary documents to 85 ~ 87, 3rd Flr, 32nd St, Pabedan Tsp, Yangon. Ph: 387366, 387431, Email: 3g@ggglory.com.mm

CHATRIUM HOTEL Royal Lake Yangon – Leading Five Star Hotel in Yangon, Myanmar with its headquarter in Bangkok, is now seeking highly energetic and motivated candidates for the following positions: (1). **Sales Manager** - F 1 Post (2). **Secretary** (Sales & Marketing) - F 1 Post (3). **Sales Coordinator** M/F 1 Post (4). **Receptionist** - F 1 Post (5). **Admin Assistant** - F 1 Post (6). **Telephone Operator** - M/F 1 Post (7). **Bellman** M 1 Post (8). **Technician** - M 1 Post (9). **Steward** - M 1 Post. Interested candidates should apply with full CV/Resume indicating position of interest, qualifications, educational background, employment records and recent photo not later than 20.11.2014. Only short-listed candidates will be notified by phone for interview. Email: hr.chry@chatrium.com Ph: 01-544500, 01-544500 HR Dept. Chatrium Hotel Royal Lake Yangon, No.40, Natmauk Rd , Tamwe Tsp. Yangon.

YOMA FLEET is seeking **Fleet Maintenance Controller**, You will be experienced with : Preventative maintenance, Panel repairs, Warranty repairs, Leading people. Apply online: www.yomafleet.com Yangon

YOMA FLEET is looking for **Operations Manager Customer Service Representative**, Mobile Truck Mechanic, Mobile Tire Specialist, Hikers (Drivers with a great attitude) Apply online: www.yomafleet.com Yangon, Mandalay Nay Pyi Taw

MYTCL is currently looking

for (Monywa, Minesite) (1) **Engineering Services Superintendent** (G0/G1.) 1 post (Male Only) (2). **Maintenance Superintendent** (G0/G1.) 1 post (Male Only) Age: Under 50. Fluency in the English. Overseas experience an asset. Experience currently working in the Mining industry. Tertiary Degree required in associated department. 10 years of operational engineering. Computer literate, Auto CAD and proficient in using spread sheets, databases and power point etc. Required skills to provide effective direction, leadership and motivation to the multinational work force. (3). **Senior Mechanical Engineer** (G3.) 2 posts (Male Only) (4). **Senior Electrical Engineer** (G3.) 2 posts (Male Only) (5). **Senior Civil Engineer** (G3.) 1 post (Male Only) Age: Under 50. Tertiary Degree required in associated department. Experience in the mining industry. 7 years in a position as a qualified and practicing Engineer, being able to demonstrate increasing responsibility within his specialty, covering all technical and managerial aspects of the planning, design and management of services and projects implementation. Excellent in English. Computer literacy and Auto CAD 3D drawings and Graphic. (6). **Mechanical Engineer** (G4.) - M/F 1 post (7). **Electrical Engineer** (G5.) - M/F 1 post : Age under 50. Tertiary Degree required in associated department. Experience working in the Mining industry. Experience with modern mineral processing facilities including equipment utilization and operating knowledge. Excellent communication skills. Computer literacy and Auto CAD 3D drawings & Graphic. (8) **English Teacher** – Mine Site (G5/G6.) M/F 1 post : Age: under 50. Fluency in English. A tertiary degree. B.A. (English) preferred. Tertiary qualifications in humanities or similar, with excellent written and verbal English communications skills. Computer literacy in word processing, spreadsheet & other essential applications. Please submit application with CV, copies of relevant certificate for education and one passport photo to Myanmar Yang Tse Copper Ltdtd Site Office Yangon Office : S & K Mine Site, Salingyi Tsp, Monywa. 70 (I) Bo Chein St, Pyay Rd,

HR Department. Hlaing Tsp, Yangon. Tel : 071 22226 , 071 22523 Tel : 01 514194~7 Contact Person : Mr. Glenn R. Wallis, email : gwallis@yangtse.com.mm

KH HOTEL Yangon is currently seeking self motivated , dedicated and potential candidates for the following posts ; (1) **Receptionists** - M/F 5 posts : Graduated in any fields, Good communication skills, English language skill, Computer literate, 1 year experience in hospitality industry (2) **M&E Technicians** - M 3 posts: Related certificates or a Diploma or B.Tech, 1 year experience in hospitality industry, Must work shift duty. (3) **Accountant** - F 1 posts: Degree holder of B.com or ACCA with LCCI level III, 2 years experience. Good computer literate & familiar with accounting software. Good management & communication skills, Previous hotel experiences is preferable but not essential. (4) **Sale Manager (or) Executive** - M/F 1 posts : Any graduated, Good communications skills, English language skill, Good sales & marketing communication skills. (5) **Driver** - M 2 posts : 10th Standard passed (or) Degree holder, Have valid licence, 2 years experience, Good Driving skill in downtown area. (6) **Bartender** - M 3 posts: 1 year experience, Good bar knowledge. (7) **Housekeeping** - M 5 posts: 1 year experience, Good communication skills, Need honesty. Please submit CV with relevant documents to hotel : 28, 7 Miles, Pyay Rd, Mayangone, Yangon. 01-652989, 01-653358, 01-653359.

STRATEGY PARTNER is looking for (1) **Cashier cum Junior Accountant** : who love numbers & has analytical thinking to handle cash transactions. Willing to learn new things & love challenges, love to work with team. Strategy Partner is newly founded as accounting firm &

providing accounting service, HR & recruitment service to SME and Branch of International company. (2) **Office Secretary** : For all posts preferably 1 to 2 years of relevant experience in similar position. Very good communication skills in English & good computer literacy. Able to work with team, multitasking and work under pressure with minimum supervision. Willing to learn new things & love challenges. Excellent interpersonal skills. Office hour - 9 am to 5 pm (Only week days). Please send an application including CV with expected salary to wai.strategypartner@gmail.com or No.(17), Shwe Tha Pyay Yeik Mon(2), Nawarat St, Tharketa, Yangon. Closing date : 7th Nov 2014.

ANANDA TRAVEL is seeking for **Sales Operator** - 3 posts: Fluent in French language (4 skills), Computer knowledge (word, excel, internet & email), Can apply this post (local or foreigner), Must have two years experience at least with attractive salary. Please submit CV with necessary documents to 106-B, Anandathuria St, Saw Bwa Gyi Gone Quarter, Insein. Ph: 09-431-60501, 09-425-328182.

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of Companies (Public) Limited is seeking (1) **Marine Surveyor** : A University Degree in related field. 2 years of relevant experience in the marine surveying industry. Strong marine background, excellent communication & writing skills. Ability to communicate at all levels, good English writing skills in necessary. Possess driving license & own vehicle. (2) **Loss Adjusters** (Motor & Non-Motor): A University Degree in Engineering (Civil), Engineering (Mechanical), Law or other relevant disciplines. Ability to communicate at all levels, good English writing skills in necessary. Possess driving license and own vehicle. Please send updated CV with salary expectation & recent photo to info@ajaxadjusters.com & thetlinoo77@gmail.com or Thet Lin Oo (Administration Manager) E.F.R Group of Companies (Public) Limited: Rm 6, 4th Flr, United Condo Tower 1, 39, Ahlanpya Pagoda Rd, Dagon Tsp, Yangon. **GOLDEN CLOVER** Travel is looking for (1) **Tour Operation Manager** - M 1 Post: 5 years of experience in tourism field. (2) **Chief Accountant** - M/F 1 Post: 5 years of experience in ICT field. For all positions: Any graduate with certificate. English language (4 skills) must be fluent. Good communication and skills social dealing. Computer literate (very good knowledge of Excel / Power Point / Word / Internet / Email) Please submit an application letter, CV with recent photo, Copies of NRC, Educational certificate and other testimonial to Golden Clover Travel & Tours : 48, Rm (E-3), 2nd Floor, Gyar Taw Ya Oat Rd, Shwe Nanthar Quarter, Bahan, Yangon, Tel: +95-18603244/45, 0949297848. Email: info@goldenclover.com.mm



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International Business Center
No. 88, Pyay Road, 6½ Miles, Hlaing Township, Yangon.
Or e-mail to hr.recruitment@daewooenp.com

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E-mail: segiunih@segi.edu.my
Website: www.segi.edu.my

TRADE MARK CAUTION

NOTICE is hereby given that **SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS CO., LTD.** a company organized under the laws of Korea and having its principal office at 416, Maetan-dong, Yeongtong-gu, Suwon-si, Gyeonggi-do, Korea is the owner and sole proprietor of the following trademark:-

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Dated: 3rd November, 2014

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Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp., a Company incorporated and existing under the laws of the United State of America, and having its registered office at One Merck Drive, Whitehouse Station, New Jersey 08889 USA, hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole Proprietor of the following Trademarks:

KEYTRUDA

Reg. No. IV/13977/2014
(29 September 2014)



Reg. No. IV/13978/2014
(29 September 2014)

The above trademarks are used in respect of “Pharmaceutical preparations” in **International Class 5**.

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Daw Thit Thit Kyaw, LL.B, MBL, H.G.P

For **Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp.**,

c/o BM Myanmar Legal Services Limited (Baker & McKenzie)

1203, 12th Floor, Sakura Tower,

339 Bogyoke Aung San Road,

Kyauktada Township, Yangon,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated: 3 November 2014

TRADEMARK CAUTION

Merck, Sharp and Dohme B.V., a Company incorporated and existing under the laws of the Netherlands, and having its registered office at Waarderweg 39, 2031 BN Haarlem, the Netherlands hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole Proprietor of the following Trademarks:

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The above trademark is used in respect of “Medicines and pharmaceutical preparations for human use” in **Class 5**:

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IV/13980/2014 (29 September 2014)

The above trademark is used in respect of “Chemical preparations for scientific purpose: biological products and preparations for laboratories re-agents for laboratories; diagnostic preparations for use in laboratories. Medicines and pharmaceutical preparations for human and veterinary use; diagnostic preparations for medical purposes; biological and serological preparations” in **Class 1 & 5**.

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the above marks or other infringements whatsoever will be dealt with according to law.

Daw Thit Thit Kyaw, LL.B, MBL, H.G.P

For **Merck, Sharp and Dohme B.V.**,

c/o BM Myanmar Legal Services Limited (Baker & McKenzie)

1203, 12th Floor, Sakura Tower,

339 Bogyoke Aung San Road,

Kyauktada Township, Yangon,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated: 3 November 2014

WASHINGTON

Fate twists legacies of Ali and Foreman

IN a reversal of roles, the outspoken Muhammad Ali won the “Rumble In The Jungle” 40 years ago last week but has become a stricken, silent icon, while brooding slugger George Foreman has turned into an outgoing tycoon.

Parkinson’s disease ended the snappy banter that was Ali’s trademark. The man who once said “when you are as great as I am it is hard to be humble” no longer speaks in public and is rarely seen.

Foreman was an awkward, unloved figure when he lost his title on October 30, 1974. But he has evolved into a slick businessman selling barbecues and grills and speaking out as a champion for the 50-and-over set.

It has been a cruel fate for Ali, who had the world title taken away in 1967 for refusing to fight in the Vietnam War.

He took his political battle to the US Supreme Court which in 1971 upheld his conscientious objector status, setting the stage for the Foreman showdown.

Ali used a “rope-a-dope” strategy in Kinshasa and let Foreman, who had not needed more than two rounds to win or defend the crown, exhaust himself throwing punches. Ali flattened his rival in the eighth round.

Ali turned into a global symbol of greatness beyond sport, his fight for civil rights and social justice creating a legacy that saw him light the torch at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Even Foreman – who took 20 years to regain the crown – cannot deny the Ali force.

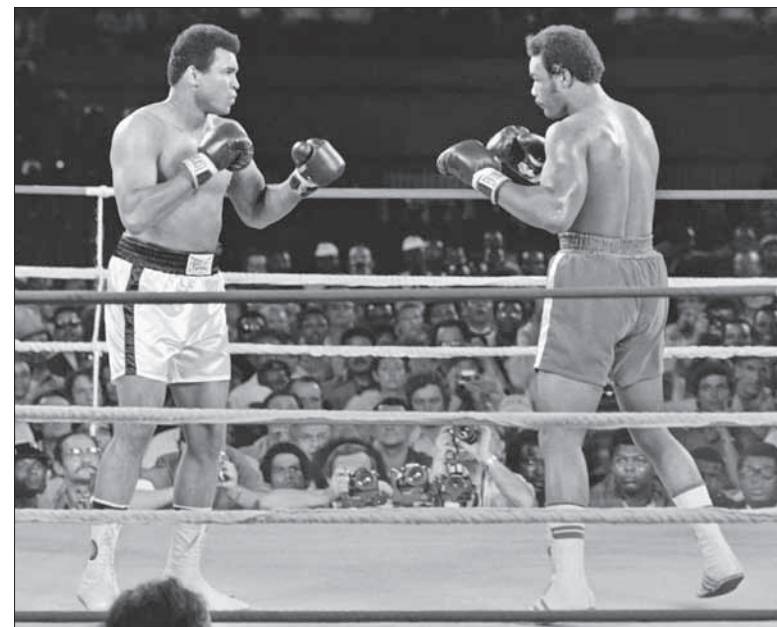
“Muhammad Ali has always been bigger than boxing,” Foreman said in an essay on his website.

“I say Ali was the greatest man because there has never been a man so young and so good at what he did, give up so much,” he added.

“I say boxing is too small for Muhammad Ali. He changes the very world. No other boxer could do that.”

In 1990, Ali went to Iraq to negotiate the release of 14 US hostages from Saddam Hussein. In 2005, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest US civilian honour.

Also in 2005, the US\$60 million Muhammad Ali Center opened in his



Muhammad Ali (left) and George Foreman fight in Kinshasa on October 30, 1974.
Photo: AFP

hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, as a museum tribute to his career and a base for his charity efforts, including humanitarian awards given out most recently in September.

Ali, now 72, has had to combat regular reports that he is critically ill, including this month.

“Don’t believe the hype. Feeling great earlier today,” Ali tweeted, along with photos of himself at a Louisville school and a Virginia resort.

“His speaking style is lower in tone and as the day goes on, he doesn’t speak as well as he does in the morning,” family spokesman Bob Gunnell told the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. “But Muhammad is a strong person for his age and for the disease he has.”

Foreman, 65, retired from boxing in 1977, became an ordained minister and opened a youth center.

A decade later, he returned to the ring at a time when Mike Tyson was the feared heavyweight fighter. Foreman took Evander Holyfield the distance before losing a 12-round decision in 1991.

But in 1994, wearing the same red

trunks in which he had lost to Ali 20 years earlier, Foreman knocked out Michael Moorer to win the heavyweight crown aged 45, still the oldest champion in heavyweight boxing.

Foreman was stripped of the titles for not fighting mandatory foes but his point had been made.

He cited a healthy diet as a reason for his success, attracting the attention of a fat-reducing grill maker. One hefty endorsement deal later, Foreman signed a deal that is estimated to have brought him \$200 million.

Foreman backed a line of large-sized men’s clothing and most recently has been a spokesperson for an inventor’s group seeking people with ideas while making appearances around his home in Houston.

Foreman told the *Daily Telegraph* he left Kinshasa “trying to find answers.”

“There had to be more to life than just ‘one, two, three, you’re out’. And I started looking for answers and that fight started me on my journey of looking for big answers. And because of that fight I found great answers too.” – *AFP*

LOS ANGELES

Ice hockey legend Howe resting after stroke, reports

CANADIAN ice hockey legend Gordie Howe suffered a serious stroke on October 26 that left the 86-year-old icon partially paralysed on one side of his body, media reported on October 28.

Howe, a former Detroit Red Wings great known affectionately in North America as “Mr. Hockey”, is also having trouble speaking after the stroke. He was resting at his daughter’s home in Lubbock, Texas, his son Murray Howe told the *Detroit News*.

“Basically, sometime in the early morning on Sunday he suffered a pretty bad stroke,” said Dr Murray Howe, who heads the department of radiology at Toledo Hospital.

“The right side of his body is very, very weak. He’s unable to stand without help. He’s able to speak, but very, very difficult to speak.

“He knows who he is. He knows the people around him. But it is very difficult for him to get up and walk

around.”

Howe played 25 seasons (1946-71) with the Red Wings, winning four Stanley Cups, six Hart Trophies as the league’s most valuable Player and six Art Ross Trophies as the NHL leading scorer.

With Sid Abel and Ted Lindsay, and later Alex Delvecchio and Lindsay, Howe comprised “The Production Line,” the most potent offensive scoring unit in the NHL from the late 1940s through the mid-1950s.

Howe is a member of the Hockey Hall of Fame, as is his son Mark.

Messages of support to the Howe family were plentiful on social media last week.

“Wishing my friend Gordie Howe all the best, you’re in all of our thoughts and prayers,” Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper said on Twitter.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman also tweeted: “The NHL family sends

prayers for strength & healing to our revered Gordie Howe. We wish him a speedy & full recovery”.

Howe came out of retirement in 1973 to play with the Houston Aeros of the newly-formed World Hockey Association.

It was with the Aeros and later the New England Whalers that he got the chance to play on a line with Mark and another son Marty.

In 1997, Howe signed a one-game contract with the Detroit Vipers of the International Hockey League at almost 70 years of age. In doing so he became the only player in history to play pro hockey in six different decades.

Howe has had a series of health issues the past few years. He suffers from dementia and he underwent spinal surgery earlier this year. But Murray Howe said he had regained fitness and was walking as much as a mile per day before the stroke. – *AFP*



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- ၁။ Promotion ကာလမှာ (၁၅-၁၁-၂၀၁၄) မှ (၁၄-၂-၂၀၁၅)ထိ ဖြစ်ပါသည်။
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- ၃။ ဆုမဲများမှာ Promotion ကာလအတွင်းသာ အကျုံးဝင်ပါသည်။
- ၄။ လစဉ် US\$ 1000 နှင့်အထက် အသုံးပြုသူများသည် လစဉ် iPad2 Mini 16GB Draw နှင့် နောက်ဆုံး Grand Prize Draw အတွက် အကျုံးဝင်ပါသည်။
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- ၆။ ကံထူးရှင်အနေဖြင့် ဆုမဲပေါက်ပြီးနောက် တစ်လအတွင်း သွားရောက်ရပါမည်။
- ၇။ ဆုမဲများအား လစဉ် (၁၅)ရက်မှ နောက်လ (၁၄)ရက်အတွင်း အသုံးပြုမှုများ အပေါ်မူတည်၍ ရွေးချယ်သွားပါမည်။
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15th Nov 2014
To
14th Feb 2015

ရောဝတီဘဏ်ရဲ့ VISA CARD နဲ့ ခရီးသွားလိုက်ပါ...

MOSCOW

Blatter opposes boycott

FIFA head says opposition to 2018 World Cup to be held in Russia is misguided

WORLD football boss Sepp Blatter on October 28 opposed any boycott of the 2018 World Cup in Russia and backed the huge preparations undertaken by President Vladimir Putin's government for the mega event.

"A boycott will never give any positive effect," the FIFA president told the R-Sport news agency in comments translated into Russian.

"We trust the country, its government," added Blatter, who was in the Russian capital to attend the official launch of the 2018 logo.

"FIFA unconditionally supports the staging of the World Cup by Russia," he stated.

Diplomatic sources said last month that European nations were discussing a possible boycott of the World Cup because of the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Some politicians in Britain, Germany and the United States have called on FIFA to withdraw the World Cup from Russia.

"When we receive letters from North America [asking for the World Cup to be withdrawn], we tell them that this is football," Blatter said.

"Russia is the world's biggest country. You know, Russia is in the eye of the international media. Football can not only unite Russia but show the whole world that it is stronger than any protest movement."

He compared the situation with Russia's hosting of the Winter Olympics in the Black Sea resort of Sochi this year, when Western leaders stayed away.

"There was the same situation ahead of Sochi, but neither during nor after the Games has there been a single word against these Games."



(Left to right) Russian Sport Minister Vitaly Mutko, Moscow's Mayor Sergey Sobyanin, Russian President Vladimir Putin and FIFA President Sepp Blatter look at the model of Luzhniki stadium during their inspection in Moscow on October 28. Photo: AFP

Meanwhile, the 2018 World Cup logo was simultaneously presented to the public on a live Russian TV late chat show and also as a part of a light show projection on the facade of Russia's historic Bolshoi Theatre.

The logo, which was unveiled by the Russian cosmonaut Maxim Surayev in a live broadcasting from the international space station 400 kilometres (250 miles) above Earth, represented

the ball surrounded by the elements of the traditional Russian decor in the shape of the World Cup trophy.

The TV show was also attended by FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke, Russia's sports minister Vitaly Mutko and Italy's former football great Fabio Cannavaro.

"Today is the World Cup's kick-off as we introduce the event's official logo," Blatter said at the ceremony.

"I'm confident that the World Cup here will be a success."

"Of course I already saw the logo and I liked it very much. This is the symbol of the country, its heart and soul."

Blatter said he was happy with Russia's work on the 2018 World Cup. Twelve stadiums in 11 cities are to be used.

"I can say that in comparison with Brazil, Russia is considerably ahead of

schedule with four years remaining before the event's start," Blatter said.

Blatter toured Moscow's iconic Luzhniki stadium that is undergoing a major rehaul and met with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who pledged to get the work done on time.

"We have no doubt that Russia can complete all the work on schedule. And, of course, at the highest level of quality," Putin told the FIFA delegation.

The FIFA boss added that the opening ceremony of the 2018 World Cup could take place a day ahead of the tournament's opening match.

"It's possible," he said.

"We tried to do that at the 2006 World Cup in Germany but it didn't work well."

"But I'm confident that in 2018 the ceremony should go off earlier. There are three stadiums in Moscow where we can hold the event's opening ceremony."

FIFA secretary general Valcke meanwhile said the football's governing body was happy with an inspection tour of the Russia's World Cup venues this month.

The joint FIFA and local organising committee group went to the construction site of the Zenit arena in Saint Petersburg, the Kazan arena, which is already operational, the Sochi Olympics Fisht arena and the reconstruction of Moscow's Luzhniki stadium and Spartak Moscow's 42,000-seat Otkrytie arena, which went into service in September.

"The inspection tour was very well-organised," Valcke told reporters.

"We're completely satisfied with all of the facilities of the World Cup in Russia. Russia has done a great amount of preparation work at all of the levels." - AFP

KUALA LUMPUR

Lee to fly to Norway for doping test

MALAYSIA'S badminton world number one Lee Chong Wei, who is reported to have failed an initial doping test, will travel to Norway on November 2 for follow-up testing, media said on October 29.

Malaysian sports officials have confirmed that one of the nation's shuttlers failed a recent doping test but have declined to identify the athlete pending the test next week on a second urine sample.

But Malaysian media have widely reported that Lee - the country's top sporting star - was found to have traces of the banned anti-inflammatory drug dexamethasone in his system during the world championships in Denmark in late August.

The state-linked *New Straits Times* said Lee has made plans to fly to Norway with a top Malaysian sports official for tests at an Oslo laboratory on a second sample provided during the tournament.

The *Star* newspaper said the test was set for November 5. It quoted Norza Zakaria, deputy president of the Badminton Association of Malaysia.

Norza could not immediately be reached and other officials declined comment.

Malaysian authorities were informed of the failed test on October 1 and have said they are investigating, including whether the drug was inadvertently taken as part of medical treatment.

Lee, 32, has struggled with a thigh injury, for which he received stem cell injections in July.

Lee has dominated the world rankings for years, but has notably failed to win a world championship or Olympic gold medal.

In Denmark he lost in the final to China's Chen Long. In the Asian Games in South Korea in September, he was beaten in the semis by his longtime arch-rival Lin Dan of China.

Lee withdrew from subsequent tournaments, citing fatigue.

Badminton is Malaysia's national sport, but officials are anxious at the lack of anyone of Lee's stature to carry the torch forward. - AFP

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Sport

FIFA boss defends 2018 World Cup in Russia

SPORT 70

KANSAS CITY

Giants dynasty edges Royals team of destiny

A WORLD Series billed as dynasty versus destiny lived up to the hype as the San Francisco Giants joined classic championship clubs by spoiling a fairy-tale run for Kansas City.

The Giants captured their third crown in five seasons with a 3-2 victory over the Royals in the October 30 deciding game of Major League Baseball's best-of-seven final, becoming the first team to win so many titles in so short a span since the New York Yankees took four from 1996 to 2000.

San Francisco added to a trophy haul that includes 2010 and 2012 and the only other National League champion with so many World Series crowns in so short a span was the St. Louis Cardinals, who won in 1942, 1944 and 1946.

"I'm numb really through all of this," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "You are so fortunate to get into the World Series and to get one. It just doesn't happen that often."

"To look at this and see we won three times, I'm amazed at what these guys did. It's not easy. But when you have a group of warriors like we have, they continue to amaze you. They were relentless."

For the Royals, who had not even reached the playoffs in 29 years since claiming their only World Series crown in 1985, the heartache was palpable after they started the playoffs with a record eight-game win streak entering the World Series.

"It's a tough pill to swallow," Royals first baseman Eric Hosmer said.

Down to their last strike, Alex Gordon hit a single that Giants centerfielder Gregor Blanco misplayed and allowed to roll to the wall, allowing Gordon to reach third base. With the tying run a tantalizing 90 feet



Buster Posey and Madison Bumgarner of the San Francisco Giants celebrate after winning the World Series on October 29 in Kansas City, Missouri. Photo: AFP

from home plate, Salvador Perez hit a pop fly for the final out.

"It hurts to come as close as we came in a one-run game and as magical as our run has been to end up losing the ballgame by 90 feet is tough," Royals manager Ned Yost said.

"But the hard part about this is that you work all year to climb to the top of the mountain and then boom, you fall back and you have got to start right back at the bottom again next year."

Yet the Royals impressed every rival with a young and talented squad that defied expectations and ended the title dreams of favoured teams like the Los Angeles Angels and Baltimore Orioles.

"We have gained a ton of experience," Yost said. "I don't think I've ever been as proud of anything in my life as I have been of this team and the way they performed this post-season. It was just fantastic."

"For them to play on the stage the

way they did this post-season was just phenomenal. As optimistic as I am, it was even more than I expected. They left everything on the field and it was an honour and a privilege to be their manager."

And this year's sorrow can become next year's motivation.

"They are still very hungry," Yost said. "It's a very dejected group. They didn't accomplish their goal. They know how close it came and they are going to want to taste it again." - AFP

SYDNEY

Cricket Australia 'never better'

CRICKET Australia on October 30 reported a strong financial position ahead of the ICC Cricket World Cup in Australia and New Zealand early next year.

Revenue of almost Aus\$300 million (US\$262 million) is expected to grow to Aus\$360 million (\$315 million) by the end of this southern summer season, CA said.

Over CA's four-year reporting cycle that spans from 2013-14 to 2016-17, revenue will climb to a projected Aus\$1.22 billion (\$1.07 billion), up from Aus\$736 million in the previous four-year period.

CA explained that cricket revenue is recorded over four-year periods due to the sometimes significant annual fluctuations in income depending on the teams touring Australia.

The organisation said it has "never been in better health" and will invest Aus\$30 million into key strategic projects, including several grassroots programmes around the country.

And CA CEO James Sutherland said cricket has never been more popular in Australia.

"From a fan's point of view, last summer's 5-0 Ashes whitewash [of England], a world-record crowd of 91,112 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Boxing Day, 1.7 million people through the turnstiles to watch cricket over the summer and huge average national TV audiences are measures which all show the Australian public loves cricket," Sutherland said.

He voiced confidence the ICC World Cup from February to March next year will further lift the profile of cricket in Australia.

"I am confident the World Cup, culminating in the March 29 final at the MCG, will be a far bigger event than most Australians expect," he said.

- AFP

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