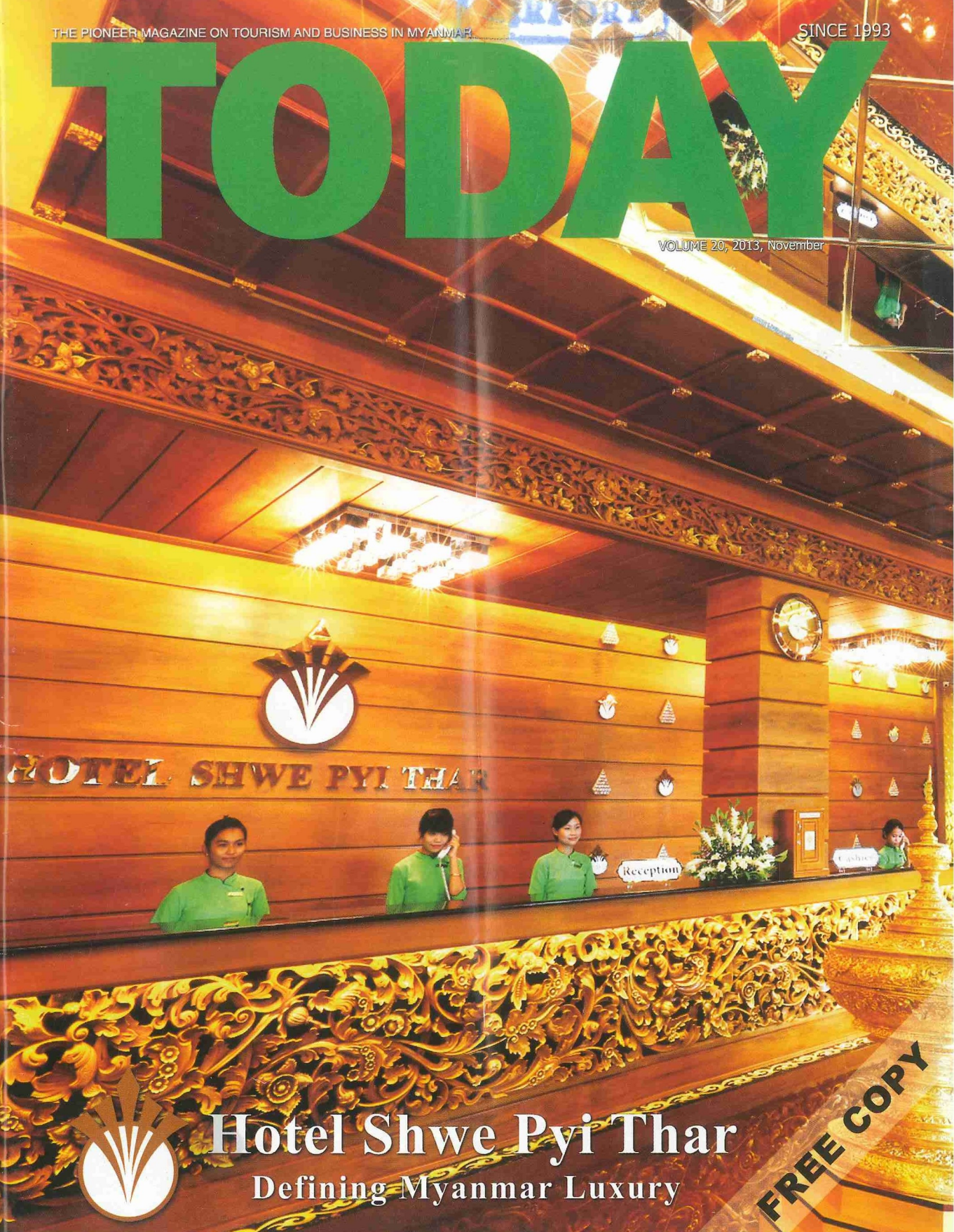


TODAY

VOLUME 20, 2013, November



Hotel Shwe Pyi Thar

Defining Myanmar Luxury

FREE COPY

Useful Calls



Ambulance (Red Cross)	392029
Customs	253046
Immigration	282715, 384994, 384995
Police (Emergency)	199
Yangon Region	245455
Police Station (Nay Pyi Taw)	067-414224
Traffic Investigation Branch	640668
Traffic Control Branch	298651
Tourist Information	252859, 378376
Tourist Information (Airport)	662652
Airport Information	533030~9

TELEPHONES

Enquiry (Inland)	100
Enquiry (Oversea)	130
Booking(Inland)	101
Booking(Overseas)	131/657555/657999
Complaint (for all)	102, 106

TELEGRAPHS

Enquiry & complaint	370692
---------------------	--------

TELEX (INTERNATIONAL)

Complaint	371693
-----------	--------

MINISTRIES

- Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation	067-410010
- Ministry of Commerce	067-408002
- Ministry of Communications, Post and Telegraphs	067-407158
- Ministry of Construction	067-407584
- Ministry of Co-operatives	067-410030
- Ministry of Culture	067-408032
- Ministry of Defence	067-469090
- Ministry of Education	067-407116
- Ministry of Electrical Power No.1	067-411083
- Ministry of Electrical Power No.2	067-410207
- Ministry of Energy	067-411060
- Ministry of Finance & Revenue	067-410046
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs	067-412335

- Ministry of Forestry	067-405004
- Ministry of Health	067-411298
- Ministry of Home Affairs	067-412318
- Ministry of Hotels and Tourism	067-406454
- Ministry of Immigration & Population	067-404026
- Ministry of Industry No.(1)	067-408066
- Ministry of Industry No.(2)	067-405320
- Ministry of Information	067-412323
- Ministry of Labour	067-404339
- Ministry of Livestock Breeding & Fisheries	067-408051
- Ministry of Mining	067-409001
- Ministry of National Planning & Economic Development	067-407023
- Ministry of Progress of Border Areas & National Races Development Affairs	067-409023
- Ministry of Railways Transportation	067-405034
- Ministry of Religious Affairs	067-406008
- Ministry of Sport	067-406038
- Ministry of Science & Technology	067-404451
- Ministry of Transport	067-411038/411040
- Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief & Resettlement	067-404021
- Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee	067-414753
- Yangon City Development Committee	01-370982

MYANMAR HOTELS & TOURISM

-Enquiry	252859/282243/ 254417
----------	--------------------------

TRIES RADIO, TV AND NEWSPAPER

-MRTV	527122/527119
-The New Light of Myanmar	392223
-The Mirror	299427, 292830

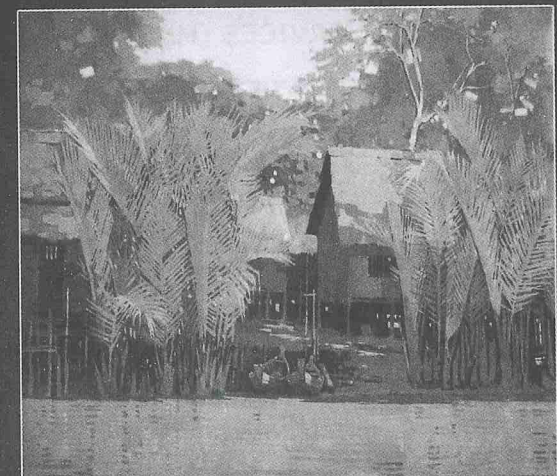
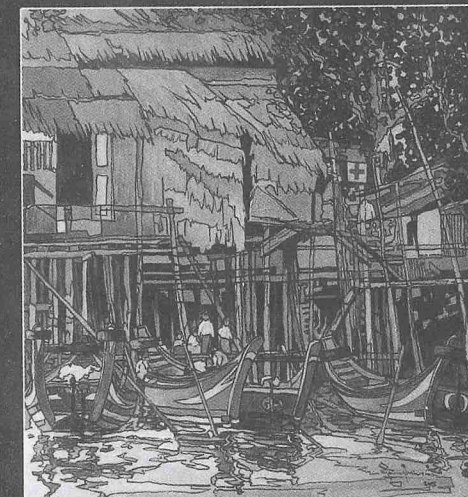
WEATHER FORECAST ENQUIRY

-Nay Pyi Taw	067-411252
-Yangon	01-667766



GOLDEN VALLEY ART CENTRE

(Established 6th December 1987)



54 / D Golden Valley, Yangon, Myanmar.

Tel : 95-1-513621 E-mail: gvarcentre@myanmar.com.mm

www.gvmyanmarartcentre.com

CONTENTS

November, 2013

- 1** - FOREIGN MISSIONS
- 2** - USEFUL CALLS
- 6** - ACCOMMODATION (YGN)
- 9** - TOPICAL THEMES
- 14** - HOW TO SAY IT IN MYANMAR LANGUAGE
- 16** - WEATHER OUTLOOK
- 18** - OTHER SERVICES (YGN)
- 28** - INTERVIEW WITH JOHN THET
- 32** - TAZAUNG DINE FESTIVAL
- 36** - THE NEED TO ENACT THE RIGHT MONETARY POLICY
- 43** - KYAIKHAM I (YEILE') PAGODA
- 46** - ACCOMMODATION (MDY)
- 49** - OTHER SERVICES (MDY)
- 53** - ACCOMMODATION (NPT)
- 54** - OTHER SERVICES (NPT)
- 56** - TOURIST ARRIVALS
- 57** - TOURIST'S ADVISORY
- 61** - INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULES
- 66** - HOROSCOPE



TODAY

November, 2013

ISSN - 1029-9009

ADVISORY GROUP
TOURISM PROMOTION DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF HOTELS & TOURISM

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Dr Tha Tun Oo

EDITOR
Wah Wah Swe

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Nu Nu Mai

ADVERTISING SECTION
Saw Wunna Kyi (Manager)
Soe Min Htike

ART SECTION
Yan Naing, Zar Lin Htet

COVER PHOTO
Moe Min (Cosmic Rays)

PRODUCTION SECTION
Aung Moe

COLOUR SEPARATION
Master, Sein

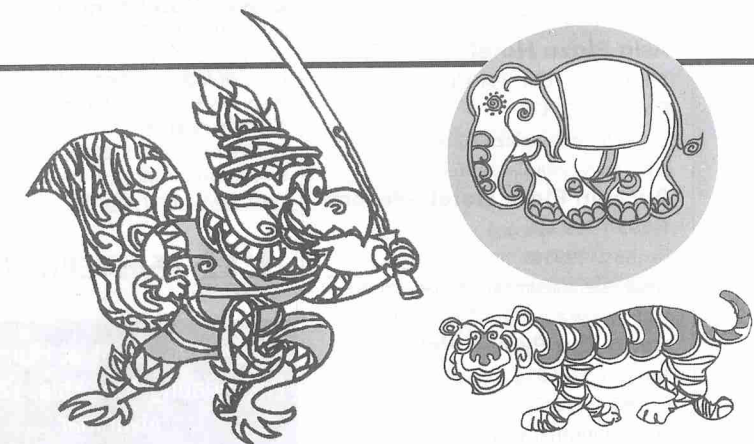
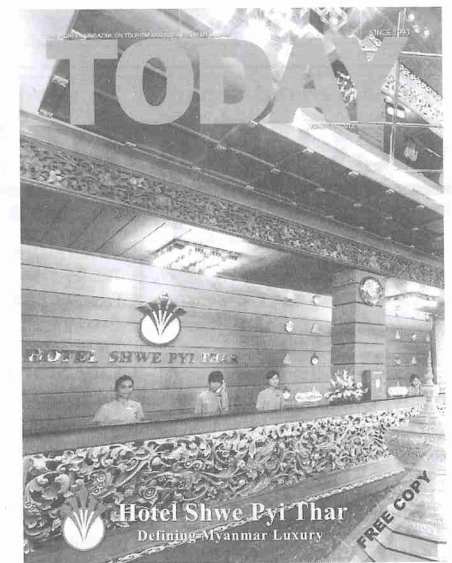
PRESS
TODAY Printing Co Ltd (P-05541)

BINDING
Swe Daw

PUBLISHER
Dr Tha Tun Oo (P-03759)

CIRCULATION
5,000 Copies

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS
Dr Aung Tun, Saw Yan Naing, Moe The



Horoscopes

66



TODAY PUBLISHING HOUSE LTD
Bldg H, Kan Yeik Mon Housing Estate, Hlaing Myint Mo Kan Street,
Hlaing Township, Yangon (11051) Tel: 951-507391, 507392, 507385,
09 73109812, 09 73109813
Fax: (95-1) 507390 E-mail: today@today.com.mm
f : Todaymgz Myanmar
BRANCH :
No 4, 26th-B Street, (BET: 78th Street & 79th Street)
Meeyahta Teik Tan, Chan Aye Thar Zan Tsp, Mandalay.
Tel: 09-73243269, 09-91027524

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means,
without the prior permission of TODAY PUBLISHING HOUSE Ltd.

To read online version, please visit <http://www.today-myanmar.com/>

TOPICAL Themes

Myanmar Executive Forum on How Myanmar Brands can take on the REGION



CEO Business and Management Magazine organized Myanmar Executive Forum entitled "How Myanmar Brands can take on the REGION," at Mindon Hall of Sedona Hotel on 3rd October, 2013. The aim of the forum was to enable Myanmar brands and businesses to sustainably compete with global brands. CEOs and Managing Directors from different business

sectors in Myanmar joined the event, where Mr. Alan Couldrey, Chairman of Ogilvy & Mather, Thailand cum CEO of The Brand Union, Asia-Pacific, and Mr. Graham Rex Hitchmough, led the discussion. This forum was sponsored by Adventure Myanmar, CityMart Holdings Co Ltd, Capital Diamond Star Group (CDSG) and United Paints Group (UPG). 

Climbing Mount Ganlamrazi Succeeded



A media briefing to mark triumph over climbing journey to Mount Ganlamrazi as a

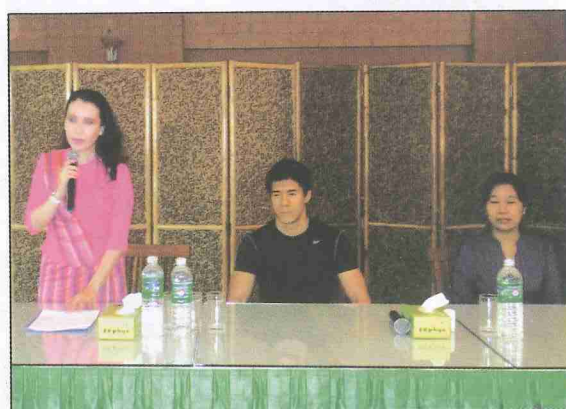
commemoration of American-Myanmar friendship took place at Sedona Hotel, Yangon, on 23rd September, 2013. Andy Tyson, the leader of American mountaineering group, and Pyae Phyo Aung, the first Myanmar to conquer Mount Ganlamrazi's peak, talked about their adventures. Ganlamrazi is a pristine peak no mountaineers have trekked before and is also the second highest mountain, which Myanmar citizens are encouraged to climb to know their natural splendor, and that's why the group took to accomplish it. There are seven mountaineers in the group and it had lasted a total of seven days to climb up and down the peak. 📷

Balance Fitness and Sein Lann So Pyay Garden Plan Cash Assistance and Fanfare for Children from Orphanages

With the aim of developing physical, mental and moral development of orphans, Balance Fitness and Sein Lann So Pyay Garden would kindly donate cash and celebrate fanfare, according to the media briefing at Sein Lann Sopyay Garden on 11th October, 2013. Ms Amm Marie, Marketing Manager of Balance Fitness, explained the objectives of opening Balance Fitness and organizing Charity Sports Day.

Balance Fitness started operation on 4th January, 2013, with equipments from world-acclaimed Technogym, and effective training from experienced personal trainers, arranging classes such as aerobics, yoga, Fit Boscing and Sizzle, all in one place.

A charity for Balance Fitness Members is planned by donation at eight orphanages. Balance Fitness, with the help of Sein Lann So Pyay, arranged Charity Sports Day on 27th October, 2013 at Sein Lann So Pyay Garden,



with the aims to improve health and communication skills of children and to let them feel the best lifestyle. At the fanfare program, three hundred orphans were trained sporting activities and made fun with games, as well as other charitable movements like food stalls, medical check-ups and feeding nutrition by Sein Lann So Pyay and Avenue 64 Hotel. 📷

First Yangon Young Chef Culinary Competition & Training, and Barista Mock Competition Show



First Myanmar Culinary Challenge and Training for young chefs in Yangon, and Barista Mock Competition Show by Ko Zaw Phone Aung and Ko Wai Phone Aung, organized by Myanmar Chefs Association, took place at Event Room of Premium Food Service Products at Aung San

Stadium on 25th and 26th September, 2013. Sponsors for the event were Nestle Professional, Maggi, Fonterra International, Pauls Cream, Dick-German Knives, San Remo Pasta, Singapore-Myanmar Exchange and CityMart.

In the competition, 58 young chefs under 25 years of age, from 14 top hotels and restaurants in Yangon, took part in categories of Bakery, Pastry, Culinary Art and Hot Live Cooking. Experts from Singapore, Thai, the Philippines and Myanmar participated as judges. Mr. Oliver Esser Soe Thet, President of Myanmar Chefs Association said, "With the objective for young Myanmar chefs to gain international competition experience, we're organizing these competition and training, and we would like to continue these programs in the years to come." 📷

J & K Co Ltd Launched Myanmar Business Incubation Center (MBI Center)

The media briefing to announce the opening of MBI Center by J & K Co Ltd, jointly founded by Japan and Korea, took place at the center office, No. 16, 87th Street, Mingalar Taung Nyunt Township, on 19th September, 2013. At the ceremony, Co-founders of MBI, Mr Brian Jung, Mr Akira Kitanaka and Director Ms Yuko Osawa spoke about MBI Center. For those international business groups interested in working inside Myanmar, MBI Center is providing economic data collection services with experienced staff in five different languages, in variety of areas like representative branches, office rental, market exploration, economic and regulatory information, and products



promotion. For more info on MBI, contact 01-374851. 📷

Day of German Unity

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Yangon organized Day of German Unity at The Strand Hotel on 7th October, 2013. Union Minister for Ministry of Finance U Hla Tun and wife attended the ceremony, along with distinguished guests and media representatives. In his opening speech, Ambassador Christian - Ludwig Weber-Lortsch said, "We offer to share our experience and assist Myanmar to rebuild their country, as a reliable and long-



term partner, through various activities by Government agencies, private companies and NGOs as described in this supplement." ☎

Grand Opening of Hotel Kan Kaw

A ceremony for the Grand Opening of Hotel Kan Kaw was held at the hotel location of No.



93 (A), Hnin Zi Gone Street, Ahlone Township, Yangon, on 6th October, 2013. U Aung Chit, founder of Hotel Kan Kaw, and Mr Hiroshi Shimokawa, owner of Shimokawa Japan Co Ltd, extended greetings at the opening ceremony. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Hotel founder U Aung Chit and Mr Hiroshi Shimokawa formally opened the hotel, and Yangon Region Chief Minister automatically put up the hotel's signboard. For more info on services of the hotel, contact: 95-9-31042562, 95-1-228566 and 95-1-225208. ☎

Six Myanmar Women Learned Solar Technology in India



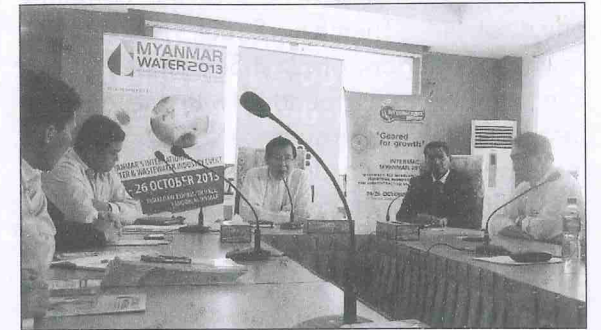
Six Myanmar women returned to home country after studying for six months at Barefoot College, an academic society in Tilonia, Rajasthan, India. At the meeting in Myanmar Peace Center,

Yangon on 16th September, 2013, they shared their experience and the plan for electrification of over 230 households. Four of them, Daw Naw Aye Sein, Daw Hla, Daw Aye Myint and Daw Kyin Yi, are from Mon State, and Daw Sabei Tin and Daw Hla Ngwe are from Bago Region. They will set up solar power equipment at every home in their villages of residence, and also provide maintenance services. Moreover, with the guidance from President U Thein Sein's 30-month rural development project, they will establish village youth organizations for electrification of every home and village. ☎

UBM Asia (Thailand) Initiated Exhibition of Intermach Myanmar, Subcon Myanmar & Myanmar Water 2013

With the collaboration of the UMFCCL and Myanmar Industries Association, organized by UBM Asia (Thailand), "Intermach Myanmar, Subcon Myanmar & Myanmar Water 2013" exhibition was opened at Tatmadaw Hall on U Wisara Road, Yangon, between 24th and 26th, October, 2013.

During the media briefing at the UMFCCL, Lanmadaw Township, Yangon, before the exhibition, Chairman of Myanmar Industries Association U Zaw Min Win said, "For the first time in Myanmar, this exhibition of industrial machines, subcontracting and water resources



will be on display, and I hope it is of great value to our members and manufacturing industries in Myanmar." ☎

Easy access to recommendation on entry visa for foreign technicians, entrepreneurs

In meeting with businessmen and responsible persons of associations, they requested the private sector development subcommittee to facilitate the process of applying for entry visa and residence permit by foreigners who will be appointed as technicians for the businesses of Myanmar citizens and foreign investors.

Issuance of letters of recommendation on the application for entry visa and residence permit by foreign technicians and foreign entrepreneurs will be carried out as follow: -

- The Ministry of Commerce is responsible to make recommendation on entry visa and residence permit for foreigners and their families and foreign employees in connection with tradition activities.
- The Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration is responsible to make recommendation on entry visa and residence permit for foreigners and

their families and foreign employees of Myanmar and foreign companies registered at the DICA.

For further information, please contact the following addresses.

- Ministry of Commerce
 - Ministry Office
Ph: 067-408266, Fax: 067-408004
E-mail: licolhan@gmail.com
 - Yangon Branch
Ph: 01-251197, Fax: 01-253028
E-mail: thanaungkyaw61@gmail.com
- Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration
 - Nay Pyi Taw Office
Ph: 067-406166, Fax: 067-406306
E-mail: nangyiyithan@gmail.com
 - Yangon Branch
Ph: 01-657891, Fax: 01-657825
E-mail: chochowynn2011@gmail.com ☎

Ref: The New Light of Myanmar

Opening Ceremony of Global World Insurance Co Ltd

The opening ceremony of Global World Insurance Co Ltd was held at the company office at 44, Theinbyu Street, Pazundaung Township, Yangon, on 21st September, 2013. The company was founded with the aims of developing life insurance and general insurance, reducing damages and improving accident control measures, for the industrial and economic growth in Myanmar. Services from the company range from fire and general insurance to automobile insurance and life insurance. Also present on the ceremony were Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Union Deputy Minister for Ministry of Finance Dr Maung Maung Thein, Minister for Yangon Region Ministry of Finance and Revenue Daw San San Nwe, Minister for Yangon Region Ministry of Social Affairs Dr Myint Thein,



Chairman of the UMFCCL U Win Aung, Chairman of the Administrative Committee of Myanma Insurance U Aye Min Thein, government officials and distinguished guests. ☎

HOW TO SAY IT IN MYANMAR

Greetings

Hello!
 Good morning!
 Good afternoon! - Min-ga-la-ba.
 Good evening!
 How are you? - Nay-kaung-bar-yè-lar
 Fine, thanks - Nay-kaung-bar-dè,
 Kyay-zu-bar-bè.
 Glad to meet you. - Tway-ya-dar-wan-tha-
 ba-dè.
 My name is ... - Kyun-daw-nar-mè-ga ...
 What is it? - Di-har-ba-lè?
 Can you speak English? - In-ga-leik-lo-pyaw-
 dat-tha-lah?
 Can you help me? - Ah-ku-ah-nyi-taun-pa
 -ya-say.
 Beg your pardon. - Pyan-pyaw-ba.

Sorry!

- Wan-nè-bar-dè/Ma-
 taw-lo-bar.

Places

Airport - Lay-zeik
 Bus Stop - Kah-geik
 Railway Station - Mee-ya-htar-bu-dar-yon
 Police Station - Yè-sa-khan
 Embassy - Than-yon
 Hospital - Say-yon
 Post Office - Sar-daik
 Market - Zay

Directions

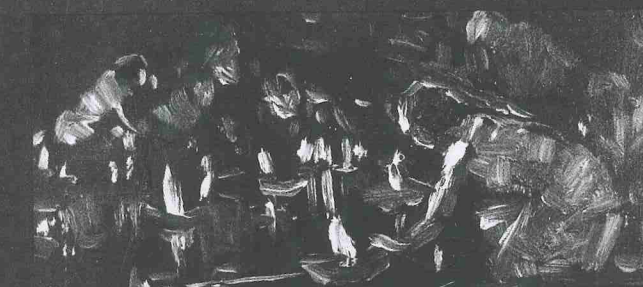
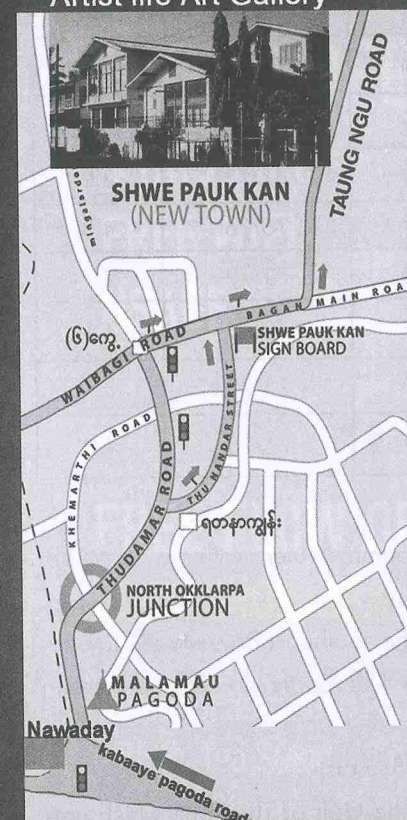
Which way? - Bè-lan-ga-thwah-ya-ma
 -lè?
 I want to go to - ... go-thwah-jin-bar-dè.
 How far? - Bè-lauk-way-tha-lè ☎

Artist Life Art Gallery

No.409-413, Taung Ngu Road, 17 Ward,
 Shwe Pauk Kan (p.o), N/Okkalapa Township,
 Yangon, Myanmar. tel; 951-707618, 951-695765, 09 50 10292,
 09 49224218, 09 73157994, 09 80 22464, 0950-77161.

Open daily (except monday)
 10:00am to 5:00pm

Artist life Art Gallery



*realistic, impressionist, abstract, modern paintings

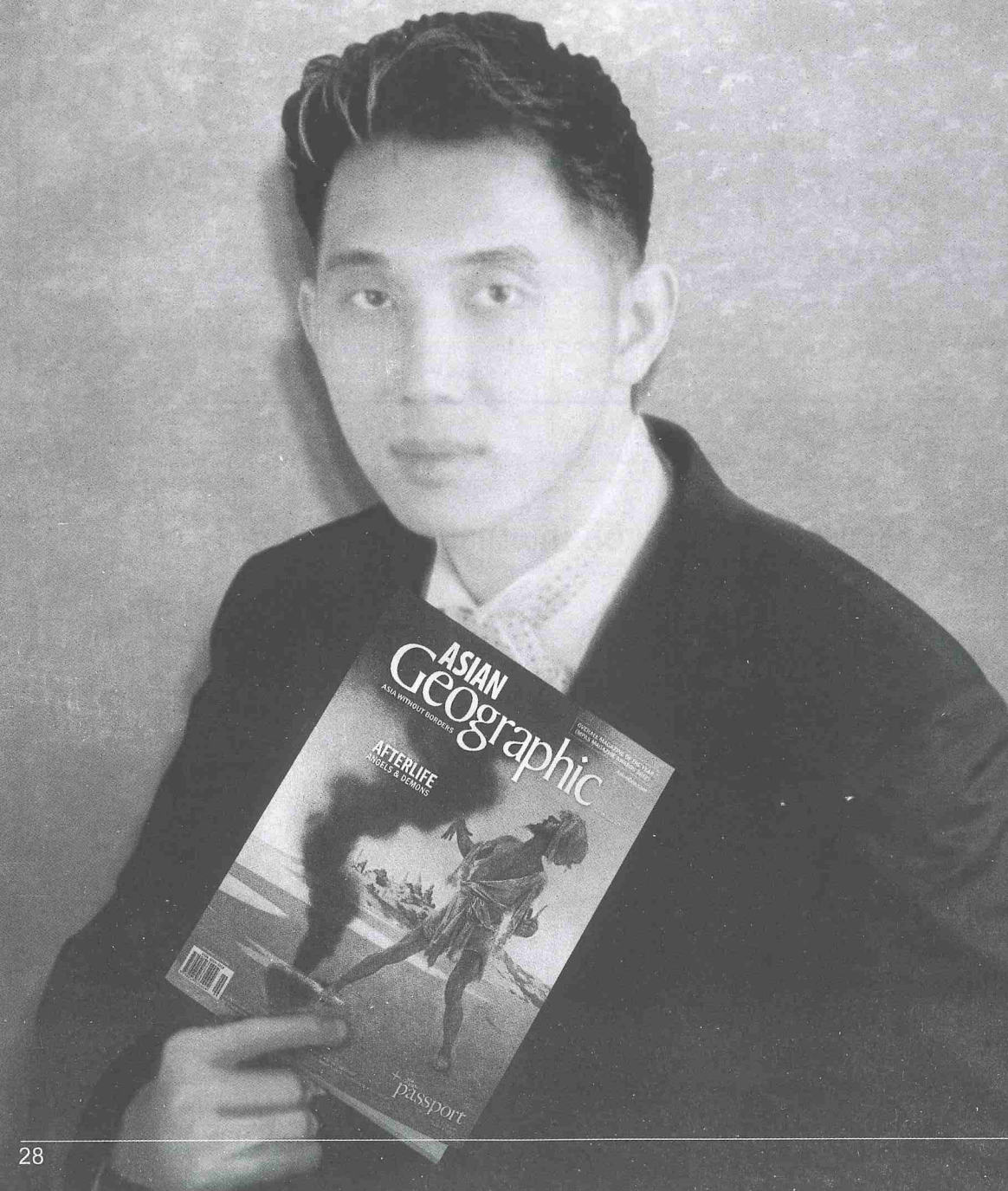
*medium (oil, water color, acrylic, pastel, charcoal,ect.

*Impressionist Myanmar Master Artist

U LUN GYWE
 and his art descendants

email; artistlife@myanmar.com.mm
 Website; www.ulungywe.com

Interview with John Thet



About the man in brief

JOHN (KYAW) THET is Publisher and Editorial Director of ASIAN Geographic Magazines Pte Ltd. In 2000, he became one of the company's founding members, taking on the role of COO and is now serving in the capacity of Creative Director, Photo Editor and Editorial Advisor. Later in November 2005, John succeeded as Publisher and under his able leadership, the magazine has gone from strength to strength, winning awards in the editorial and art direction of the magazine, and he is relentless in both the publishing and creative arena. Today, he is still actively involved in efforts to bring ASIAN Geographic to new heights ASIAN Geographic Magazines Pte Ltd currently publishes six titles: ASIAN Geographic, ASIAN Geographic JUNIOR, ASIAN Geographic READ, Scuba Diver AUSTRALASIA, Scuba Diver THROUGH THE LENS, and Asian Diver. The titles have received both local and international acclaim, winning more than 28 awards to date, including Overall Magazine of the year 2012 at MPAS Magazine Awards 2012. In coming October 2013 Asian Geographic will celebrate its 100th issue.

Educational background

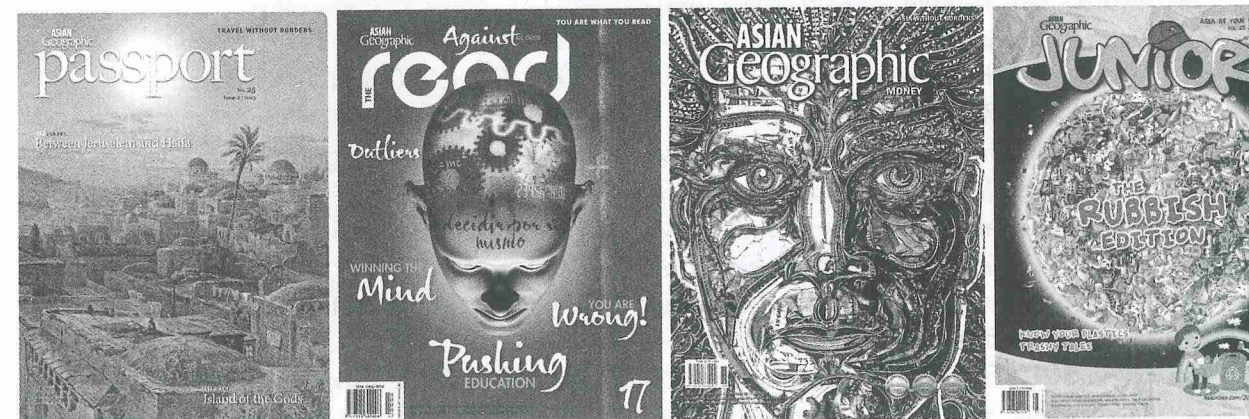
Multi Media

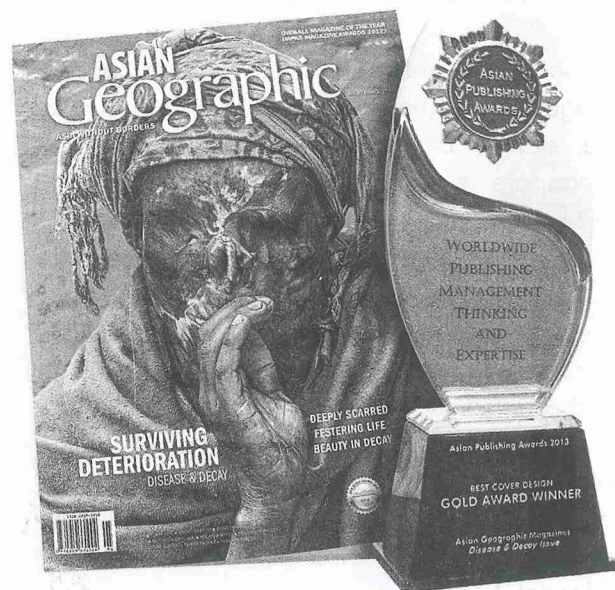
How you set up your company

I have been in publication industry for the past 20 years now. I came to Singapore in 1990. When I was studying Multi Media, I met a person who wanted to start Singapore Soccer Magazine and he offered me to join him and we started a sport publication house in Singapore in 1993 and most of the sports publications in Singapore were published by us, including Singapore Sport Council official magazines. In 2000, I met two Austrians (Photographer and Editor). They started Asian Geographic Magazine as a very small production and printed 6 issues with professional Art Director or production so I was the one to fill in with them and started from Asian Geo issue 7, starting in the role of COO and serving in the capacity of Creative Director, Photo Editor and Editorial Advisor.

The landscape of print media industry in general

In general most of the print media are trying to find ways to get going especially because so many apps and e-magazines are available online now. Still so much depends on what kind of print media you are in : Education, Fashion, News and many different media need different approaches.





The Future of print media

The future of print media is not an easy path. We need a lot of hard work and we have to keep finding out who are our readers and what they need. Because of social media and free sources of web publishing world, you need to be different and ask yourself, 'Can you get those information online?' We must add value for our readers and make sure that our contents are good enough to sell in the market.

Briefly about your magazines

Asian Geographic was started in 1999. We bring Asian to the world aimed at showcasing the best of Asia to the world. From culture and heritage to environmental issues and social trends—we are proud to bring you all that about Asia in all its beauty. ASIAN Geographic has a consistent editorial focus.

2013

- Asian Publishing Awards 2013 Gold Award
- Best Cover Design

2012

- Asian Publishing Awards 2012 Excellence Award - Best Cover Design
- Asian Publishing Awards 2012 Excellence Award - Best Feature on Asia Travel (AG)
- Asian Publishing Awards 2012 Excellence Award - Best Feature on Asia Travel (AG PASSPORT)
- Asian Publishing Awards 2012 Excellence Award - Best Multimedia Integration to Engage Audiences
- Magazine Publishers Association Singapore (MPAS) 2012 Overall Magazine of the Year
- MPAS 2012 Editor of the Year
- MPAS 2012 Feature article of the Year (Consumer)

- MPAS 2012 Designer of the Year

2011

- MPAS Best Special Edition of the Year (AG PASSPORT)
- WAN IFRA Best in infographics Award
- WAN IFRA Best in Design Award
- MPAS Award 2011 for Best Editor of the Year Award

2010

- MPAS 2010 Best Visual Spread/Photography of the Year
- MPAS 2010 Magazine of the Year (Bronze Award)
- MPAS 2010 Best Front Cover Design of the Year
- MPAS 2010 Best Feature Story of the Year
- MPAS 2010 Travel Magazine of the Year (AG PASSPORT)

Asian Geographic is a collection of classics that follows a different theme with each issue. ASIAN Geographic showcases the region's past, never going out of style, present and future in an intriguing way that not only entices readers but also informs and educates. As the region's leading geographical magazine, we have our fingers on the pulse of Asia, with award winning



- MPAS 2010 Best New Magazine of the Year (AG JUNIOR)
- WAN IFRA 2010 Best in Photojournalism Award
- Asian Publishing Awards 2010, Excellence Award (Runner-Up) Design and layout Category.

2009

- MPAS Award 2009 for Best Visual Series/Photograph

2006

- Asia Travel & Tourism Creative Awards 2006

2002

- Genesis Award (USA) for "Bear Witness" Feature story on Conservation in Asian Geographic.

contributors scouring the region to bring readers the most compelling stories and images.

The events (Diving, Photo contest)?

Asian Geographic organizes Photo competitions (Asia Without Borders) every year and now we've got 104 countries enter for this photo competition. I saw a few Burmese photographers submit for our competition as well. Our grand prize winner gets US\$ 5,000 in cash and we're open to all. You can find out more about this Photo competition at www.asiangeo.com

Asian Geographic organizes Asia Dive Expo (ADEX) every year in Singapore and next year ADEX will be on 11-13 April 2014 at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore.

We received more than 38,000 visitors from all over the world to attend this and we showcase Diving sport, Ocean conservation and Marine Eco Tourism plus Underwater Photo and Video in our yearly event. www.uw3some.com/ADEX

Your learning experiences as publisher outside Myanmar

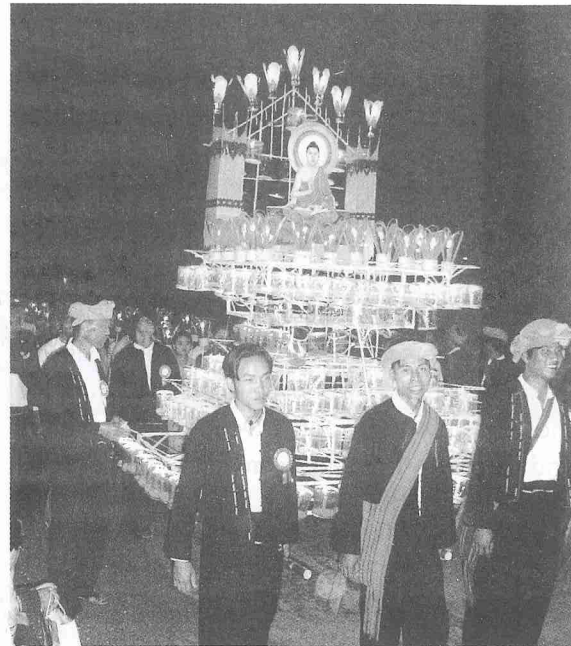
My experiences have to do with technology and how media business is done in general, but it doesn't matter where or what you learn. You are still in Media and we must act according to Media rules.

Every industry has rules, You need to know why those rules must be followed to be a world class publication.

Thank you TODAY publishing group for giving me a chance to share with Burmese readers about Asian Geographic Magazines, myself being away for many years and working with the rest of the world for so long, and it's always good to be part of where you are from. And I believe "IT'S NOT THE YEARS IN YOUR LIFE, BUT THE LIFE IN YOUR YEARS THAT MATTERS." 🙏

TAZAUNGDAINE FESTIVAL

Ye Dwe



Unsatisfied yet with the fun of the lighting festival of Thadingyut, the people start looking for an excuse to have another lighting festival. Thadingyut's lightings are closely connected with Buddhist legend but Tazaungmon lightings or Tazaungdaing are merely a recurrence of the Thadingyut festival under a pretext. Tazaungdaing means a pillar of lights ('tansaung', pronounces 'tazaung' — lights; 'taing', pronoun -ces 'daing' here—post or pillar).

Tazaungmon (November) is the month when the Krattika planet (Pleiades) accompanies the Moon, and when Mahavinayaka awakes from his long slumber. It is a pre-Buddhist custom in Myanmar to do homage to this deity on the Full Moon night of Tazaungmon with offerings of incense, sweetmeats and lights.

Tazaungdaing is therefore non-Buddhistic in origin but Myanmar genius for adaptation does not find it hard to connect it with Buddhism. The Buddha's mother, reincarnated as a god in Tavatimsa, perceived from her heavenly abode that her son would soon be discarding the royal robes and wearing a monk's garments. She wanted to provide the yellow robes of the monk and she had only a night's time. But she had it woven in a single night and offered to the prince (Siddhatha) by a celestial messenger. In memory of this expedition, the Myanmar people would, on the evening of the Full Moon Day of Tazaungmon, organize into teams to make a piece of yellow robe for the Lord.

As soon as the sun sets, cotton seeds are strewn on the ground, symbolic of the sowing; the full moon enchants you to believe that plants grow up, and so the cotton is plucked; it is then cleaned of dirt, dressed, i.e., beaten with a bowstring, ginned and spun into thread, the thread then undergoes a series of complicated operations and is put to the weaving loom. The weavers feverishly weave on to obtain enough cloth for a piece of yellow robe. They cut up the cloth into bits, and have it stitched up into a garment, ready for the offering by dawn. If it is belated, it is taken as a failure. The yellow robe is therefore called "Matho-thingan" (Matho, not stale i.e., fresh; here; "done before dawn; Thingan, the monk's yellow robe"). Much laughter and merriment accompanies this festival. For instance when the girls are plucking the cotton, a mischievous but sportive group of young men would cover themselves with blan-kets and pretending themselves as elephants, chase the girls, who would take their cue and feign fright.

A popular delicacy on such nights is the Mezali (*Cassia siamea*) flower-buds of the tree with medicinal qualities, boiled and seasoned with sesames, groundnut, fried garlic, etc.

Some hold the belief that the Mezali has supreme medicinal values on the Full Moon night of Tazaungmon when the moon attains meridian because at that particular time of the year the guardian god of the tree is glorified and paid homage to by all the other gods. This, again, is a pre-Buddhistic belief.

The Full Moon night of Tazaungmon is also popularly believed to be an auspicious time when all the stars of the firmament acquire a special luminosity, and their assemblage is fullest. If that is so, the assemblage is made even more complete by the fire balloons, the heaven-ward pilgrims to the Culamuni.

This is also a sanctified season, this month of Tazaungmon. For the yellow robes offered to the monkhood during the period, beginning from the First Waning Day of Thadingyut and ending on the Full Moon Day of Tazaungmon, carry with them special virtues that can nullify certain minor faults in the wearer, thereby rendering the gift more meritorious. The yellow robes offered in this season are called "Kathein thingan" because the donors, in making their offering, say "This Kathina Civaram we do give to the Sangha". From Kathina Civaram, we get "Kathein thingan." The offering itself is made in accordance with certain prescribed rules but they need not be explained here. Suffice it to say that Kathein Thingan is a special and seasonal gift of yellow robes received by the monkhood according to the Vinaya Law.

An offering of Kathein thingan is usually a big affair. In Mandalay, Shwebo and Sagaing for instance, they may be a pooling of gifts of the whole town or major sections of the townspeople such as the ministerial staff, the commercial community, the transport services, etc. Although "Thingan" is the prime gift, there are a thousand and one gifts accompanying it



Mezali (*Cassia siamea*)

in these offering ceremonies. Theatrical entertainments of sorts is a common feature, the season itself being very favourable to night-long amusements. On these nights there would not only be stalls where one can buy eatables but also free refreshment booths (Neibban-zay).

On the day of offering, the gifts, tied to moveable stands symbolising the fabulous Padesa tree or Kalpa Vriksha of the primeval days from which you could wish for and get anything you wanted, are lined up in procession, accompanied by much music and dancing, brought to the chosen monastery and offered to the monks in ceremony. Because the gifts are displayed before being offered, the festival is commonly called "Kathein-Khin" — "Khin" meaning "to display".

The Kathein festivals account for the greatest significance in Tazaungmon. Poets of the past have referred to them in common. To cite one here, we have Maha Atula Mingyi's Lwan-gyin (a romantic song).

"... Of the twelve months, Tazaungmon, making one's bosom cold, is the month when the Moon enters the orbit of the Vrsceika (Scorpio); when the Luffa plant is in full bloom, spreading its aroma all round; and when the great noble kings make Kathein offering." 🕯