

INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTOPHER P. HERINK, National Director of World Vision Myanmar

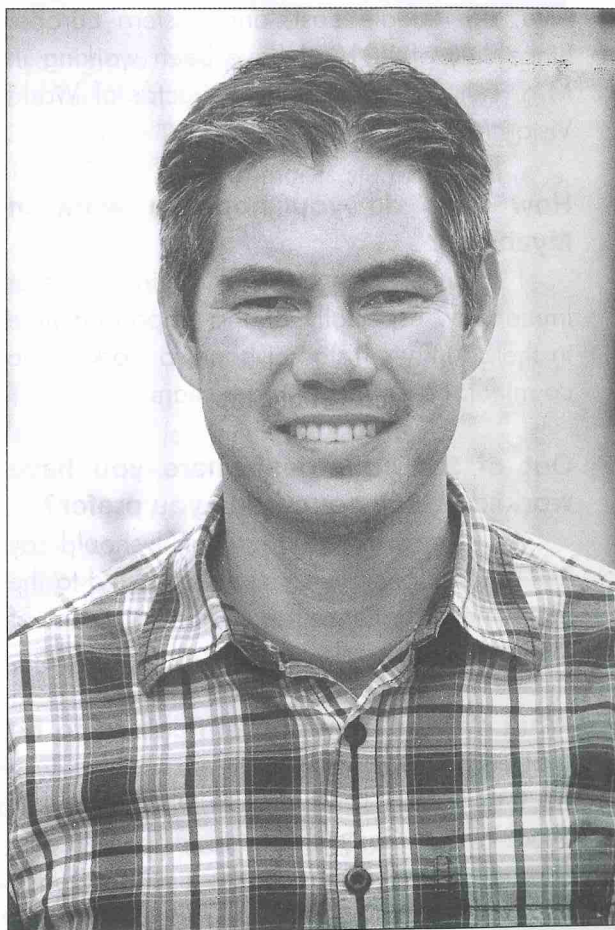
World Vision is an international non-governmental organization (NGO), focused on improving the social and economic welfare of the most vulnerable people in Myanmar. Operating in the country since 1959, Yangon-based World Vision now has 129 projects underway in 11 states and regions. TODAY interviews World Vision's Christopher P. Herink, learning about his work and life in Myanmar.

First please introduce yourself to our readers...

My name is Christopher P. Herink, but I'm known as Chris. I am married with two sons. All of my family is now residing in Myanmar.

Please elaborate on your work and activities ...

I joined World Vision since 1999. I started my career as a history teacher at an international School in Hong Kong. I had the opportunity to travel to emerging Asian countries such as India, Indonesia, realizing the importance of education to transform societies. In order to learn more, I went to graduate school, earning a degree in Educational Policy and Planning from Harvard University. Afterwards, I worked for a local NGO in India, where many children had no schooling for lack of money, distance, inadequate facilities, and prejudice against girls. In such an environment, community-based schools sometimes known as non-formal education can allow children to learn basic reading and writing. As in India, non-formal education provides an important way for



Myanmar children to continue their learning, outside of the state school system. From India, I started an NGO in Pakistan, which adapted educational TV shows for broadcast. One of the shows we adapted was Sesame Street. It was fun to see Big Bird speaking Urdu!

Your different official positions at World Vision please

My first job with World Vision was based in Washington DC. I was a Program Officer, covering a number of countries in Asia. After three years, I moved to Vietnam, where I worked as the Program Director for three years. I left World Vision for a number of years, working for the Red Cross. In 2007, I returned to World Vision to serve as the Regional Director for Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. Since July of 2010, I have been working in Myanmar as the National Director of World Vision Myanmar.

How long do you hope to work in Myanmar?

I am enjoying work and life in Myanmar immensely, especially at this important time in the country's history. I hope to work in the country for a couple of more years.

Out of the countries where you have worked, which country do you prefer?

As I am living in Myanmar, I should say Myanmar! Honestly, I am very attracted to the friendliness, resilience, and community spirit of the Myanmar people.

What are the common difficulties to be met with in working in Myanmar?

I think that travel around the country is difficult, particularly to remote and border areas. The poor infrastructure makes it hard to reach needy places. I also think the low investment

in health and education _ both from domestic and international source _ is a big challenge to universal access. The quality of health and education services could also use improvement. Even so, we find willing partners at all levels of the country, with different ministries, and with community-based organizations.

Your branches and strength of personnel in Myanmar please?

There are 35 offices, 845 staff and 3200 volunteers.

What do you think about your current Myanmar staff?

We have a number of technical staff members, including doctors, engineers, school teachers, and other professionals. We are grateful to have such skilled and committed staff members. Additionally, World Vision relies on a network of community volunteers, who mobilize community participation, deliver technical capacity building, and document impact. We know that we can multiply our efforts by engaging community volunteers.

How do you go about smooth management?

Our organization has different divisions _ for example, Finance, Human Resources, Operations, and Disaster Response. But we are all united in a common purpose of serving vulnerable children in Myanmar. Sometimes our organization has to work with government agencies as well as non-government communities. Success means effective collaboration with clear results.

Currently, is World Vision set to give aid to Kachin and Rakhine?

It is not possible for us to cover the whole of Myanmar. Since there are other organizations



offering assistance in Rakhine, we have decided to focus our support to displaced people in Kachin State. We have worked in Kachin State since 2008 and we are currently assisting people in 14 camps in Waimaw Township.

What HIV programmes are being implemented?

We focus on HIV prevention, care, and support activities. We try and target the people and communities which are most vulnerable _ for example, those who are along transportation routes or those who are migrants. One of the best things we do is to establish peer support groups, which help those who are affected by HIV and which serve to prevent additional infections through peer education. In addition, we have active TB and malaria programs.

In which time of the year do you take trips locally?

I travel whenever I can. I have been to about 25 towns and cities such as Myeik, Kawthoung, Thanbyuzayat, Hpa-an, Mawlamyine, Patheingyi,

Myaungmya, Yenangyoung, Chauk, Mandalay and Tachileik. I have plan to go to Thabaung, Kokant, and Tiddim in the early part of 2013. The diversity of Myanmar is stunning. There is so much to see and learn!

May we know world vision's aims for 2013?

We will continue to support activities in education, particularly early childhood development for children age 3 to 5 years. We will also work to help farmers with improved seeds, fertilizers, planting techniques and access to credit. Micro finance is an area of significant growth, given the new law passed in November 2011. We will also be working with communities and the government on disaster preparedness.

How does your former stint as school-teacher help your present activities?

One of my jobs is to communicate to others what World Vision is doing, how we are doing it, and what are the results. In this, I view myself

as an educator, always looking for interesting and effective ways to connect with others.

If chance permits, would you become a teacher again?

I would. I think one of the greatest qualities a person can have is curiosity. I am always trying to learn new things, and I'm keen to share with others too.

What do you get to do on holidays?

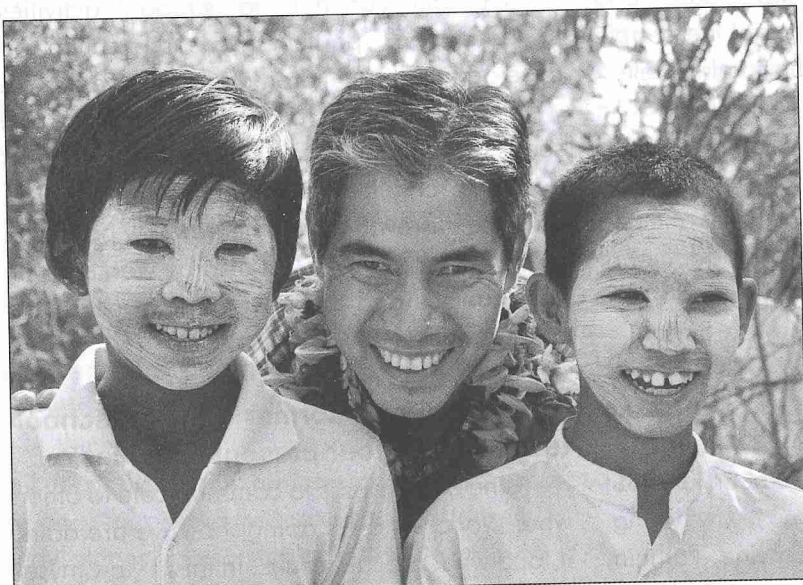
I enjoy swimming, cycling, and running. I would like to be more consistent in my exercise, but any sweaty day is a good day!

Some with advancing age, some would stop travelling. What about you?

There are so many interesting places in the world, so I cannot imagine staying in one place. Therefore, whatever my age, I think I will always look forward to travelling.

Any unforgettable experiences during a domestic travel?

We took a wonderful family trip from Lashio to Hsipaw to Pyin Oo Lwin to Mandalay.



This included taking the train over the Goitek viaduct. On another trip a few months ago, my family and I hiked from Kalaw to Inle Lake. Its very special to be walking in such beautiful countryside.

What if a friend asked you about major characteristics of a Myanmar...

I really respect the unselfishness of the Myanmar people. It always seems that people are thinking about others before themselves. I think this is wonderful foundation for a person, community, and a country.

What about the country?

Myanmar has amazing geographic diversity, with its long coastline, high mountains in the north, and great rivers. It is also wonderfully situated, having borders with Bangladesh, India, China, Laos and Thailand. Myanmar has it all!

Your view on Myanmar's communications please?

Communications is much better than in the past, and will hopefully get better in the future.

Internet access and speed is still slow. Phone calls are still expensive. And SIM cards, though going down in prices, are still not accessible to most people.

Did you get to return to your place of birth for a while?

I returned last past summer. When I came back to Myanmar. I felt like returning to a home. The chance to reside here is a blessing to me. ☺

Tourist's Advisory



YANGON

The city of Myanmar, founded by King Alaungpaya in 1,755, over 350 sq km in area, with a population of about 5 million.

How to get there

Daily flights from Bangkok and Singapore Malaysia and Kunming. The domestic airlines Myanmar Airways, Yangon Airways, Air Bagan and Air Mandalay have regular flights to Mandalay, Bagan, Kawthaung and other tourist destinations.

Where to stay and dine

A wide choice of accommodations ranging from 4-star deluxe hotels to economy class hotels and motels.

How to go about

Limousine service at Yangon International Airport, free airport transfer by major hotels, taxis easily available in town.

Why so special

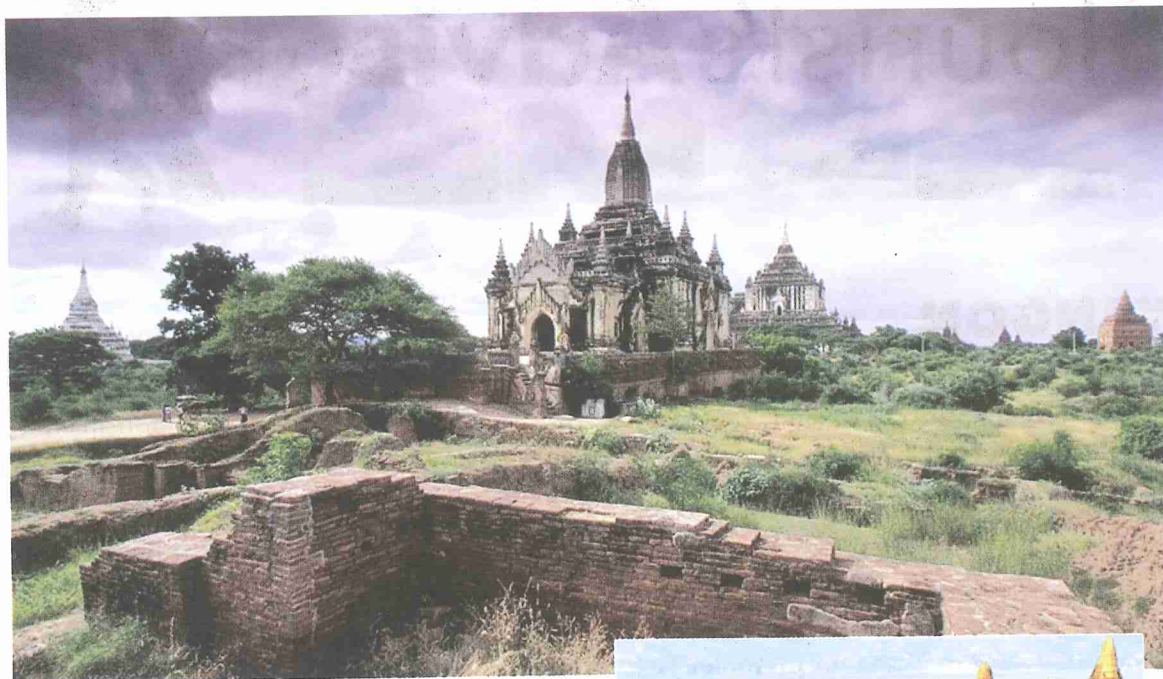
Shwedagon Pagoda where the relics of four Buddhas were enshrined, built over 2,500 years ago.

Kaba Aye Pagoda where in 1954 the Sixth Buddhist Synod was held in the Great Stone Cave.

National Museum houses the last Myanmar king's Lion Throne, royal regalia, manuscripts, etc. ☺



BAGAN



About 430 miles from Yangon; the main tourist attraction in Myanmar, on the eastern bank of the Ayeyarwaddy River; capital of the first Myanmar Empire; its area of 42 sq km has over 2,000 well-preserved pagodas and temples of the 11th -13th centuries.

How to get there

Daily flight between Yangon and Bagan; flight to Bagan takes an hour and ten minutes. Also regular Express local service from Yangon and Mandalay; from Mandalay and Heho it is only 20 minutes' flight; express trains from Yangon and Mandalay stop at Thazi, from where it is only a three hours' drive to Bagan. Also double decker steamer service between Mandalay and Bagan and a luxury cruise "Road to Mandalay".

Where to stay

Hotels, guest houses and motels with modern facilities at reasonable prices.



What to see

Shwezigon Pagoda, the first Buddhist building built in Myanmar style; Ananda Temple has four huge Buddha Images in standing position and reliefs depicting the Buddha from his Birth to his Enlightenment; That-byinnyu, the highest white stucco building in Bagan; Dhammayangyi, Bagan's most massive pagoda; left unfinished, it displays the foremost brickwork; they are but a few of pagodas in Bagan, practically all of them built by Kings. The Bagan Museum houses artifacts of historical and cultural interest. 🏛️

TAUNGGYI

The capital of Shan State. About 726 Km from Yangon. A hill station, over 1,430 metres above sea-level.



How to get there

By car all the way in 16 hrs. By train up to Nyaung Shwe and thence to Taunggyi by car. Air service up to Heho, then by car. From Taunggyi it is about an hour's drive to Inlé Lake.

Where to stay

Taunggyi International Hotel, Duwun Motel, Hotel Empire, Paradise, and Golden Island Cottages Hotel.

What to see

Taunggyi is cool and pleasant all the year round. The market on every fifth day is crowded with ethnic minorities in their traditional dresses. Taunggyi Museum is worth visiting. 🏛️

PINDAYA

Location

45 km to the north of Kalaw and in the Shan State.

How to get there

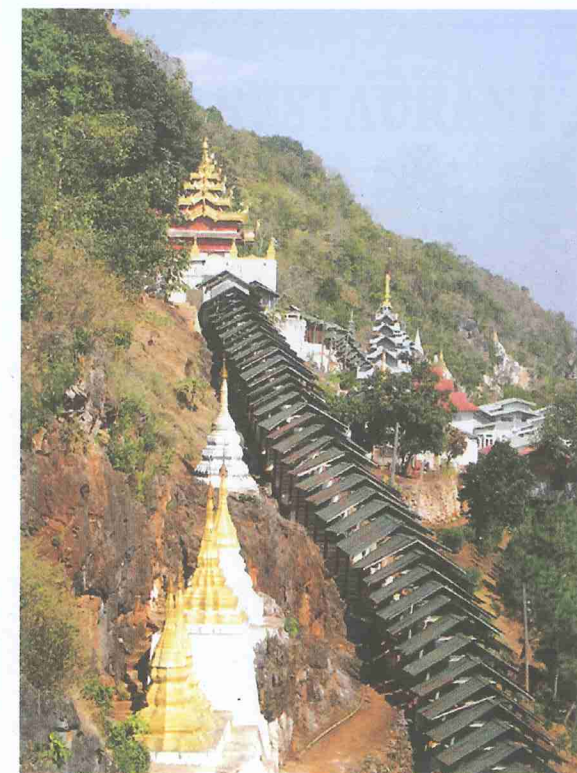
You can take a regular flight to Heho and motor to Pindaya or motor to Pindaya via Heho.

Where to stay and where to dine

Pindaya Hotel, Conqueror Hotel, Inlay Inn.

Why so special

Pindaya is noted for its extensive limestone caves, set deep in the hillsides, where you'll see about 6,000 Buddha images and stalagmites. And at the entrance of the hillside caves you'll see Shwe Oo Min (Golden Cave) Pagoda of 15 metre height. 🏛️



CHAUNG THA

Chaung Tha Beach-only 246 km from Yangon- is the nearest beach resort located in the Ayeyarwaddy Region. Along the 5 hours' drive to the beach, one can feast one's eyes on the vast stretches of lush green paddy fields.

How to get there

Only 5 hours' drive from Yangon.

Where to stay and where to dine

There are bungalow-type hotels facing the sea. Ambo Resort Hotel, Chaung Tha Beach Hotel, Shwe Dove Hotel and guesthouses in the nearby Chaung Tha village are at your service. Seafood is fresh and plenty at the restaurants there.

Why so special

En route to Chanug Tha, one visits Pathein, the capital of the Ayeyarwaddy Region, and try Pathein Halawar, its speciality. Pathein umbrella is the symbol of the Region.

Reaching the beach, one can enjoy the salubrious breeze crossing the long stretching sea and the horizon. Surfing over the white-crested waves is an unforgettable experience. Pokala Island and Thebyu Island - 5 minutes' and 20 minutes' drive by motorboat respectively-boast their beautiful, white sand beaches. It takes exactly one hour to Ngwe Saung Beach, the latest beach resort of Myanmar. 🌀



Daw Tint Tint Lwin, Helmsman of Tint Tint Travels & Tours, Yandapo and Irrawaddy Princess II

Translated by - Khin Aung (ENGLISH)

Among the many changes happening in Myanmar the tour business is picking up a very significant role. Thus several manner of luxury cruise to take in the lovely Myanmar culture of the countryside and beautiful natural environment on the part of foreign visitors are now available. And it is wondrous that some of the leaders in this business are women, including Daw Tint Tint Lwin, head of Yanapo Luxury Cruuse, Irrawaddy Princess II Luxury Cruise, and Tint Tint Travels & Tours Agency. Today interviews her below.

How did you start up?

I was a German-Language tour guide during 1999-2009 at a Swiss company German clients, that is, Germans and German-speaking Swiss and Austrians are much attracted to Irrawaddy riverine cruise, Mandalay-Bagan, or Mandalay-Bhamo-Myitkyina-Bagan. I have personally studied their Tourism in Europe, where cruises are very expensive and cheap cruises last about 20 minutes only. In Myanmar, the wood for shipbuilding is cheaper than other countries, let alone labour costs. Thus I first set up a Travel Agency capitalized on my earnings as a Guide. Then I got to build a teak boat, Yandapo Day Cruise. Without a cabin, this boat still achieved considerable success because the fillings and furnishings were up to international standard and service was at our level best. But my local colleagues and foreign visitors suggested another new boat so I bought Irrawaddy Princess II to have its furniture and decoration in accord with European Design, and service and safety upgraded.

Do you achieve your aims held in young adulthood?

In my youth I was overwhelmingly interested in foreign languages, and believed that with a through knowledge of a foreign language the people's socioeconomic life becomes understandable to you and you can work abreast with them. Since I matriculated I tried to learn several foreign languages, especially German. I was determined, through using them, to achieve the goal of my desire.

Please elaborate on how hard you made efforts as a town guide?

Born of a civil servant family, I have had to work harder than others. In 1998 I went to Institute of Foreign Languages for a diploma, majoring in German. A tour guide for a Swiss company since 1999. I used to be well prepared always, like to-do list for tomorrow, for the day after tomorrow, how to deal with all passible consequences. I was everywhere taking care of all sorts of tour like biking, trekking, birds watch-



ing but I did not highlight our needs and difficulties but used diplomatic ways. For example, at poor communities I explain that though people have less money they still have some livelihood, family, and rich natural resources so that the foreigners start to appreciate and not look down upon Myanmar mentality.

Please relate a memorable experience as a tour guide?

As a fresh guide I once accompanied a big party of tourists on an 18 day journey all across Myanmar. But near Myitkyina we came across inclement weather, broken bridges and impossibility to proceed. Finally I went alone to a nearby village, asked for help of its people and took the tourists across the raging creek on a raft, then back to hotel in safety. After completion of the tour programme when I was about to say farewell to them at the airport they gave me a packet as a present. Back at home, it was found to contain USD 7500. It is unforgettable.

Joining hands with staff, what methods do you use for leadership?

I have about 50 staff, who can participate in business discussions openly. They are urged to put themselves cent per cent in work, but their own free time is never encroached upon. On board the boat or at office the possible solution for a problem coming from all goes under analysis. Only then is a decision like acceptable, unacceptable, worthy of a warning, or unforgivable, is made. Staff are closer to business operation than their boss, whose decision cannot be right always. Thus staff from Manager down to cleaner may make suggestions, out of which worthy suggestions are immediately implemented.

Any times of difficulty? If any, how did you survive them?

Of course, a great many difficulties but the

hardest one cannot be identified. Those without a background of rich parents will find it extremely difficult to get a foothold in economic and social life. Out of action, intelligence and effort I first use intelligence, then make effort for a worthy goal so that fortune favours me to some extent. Moreover, I usually have plan A, plan B and plan C. If plan A does not work, plan B follows; if still unsuccessful, I will take up the last plan.

In your line of work you have to mainly deal with foreigners. What would you say about their strengths and weaknesses?

A tour guide has more contacts with foreigners than a migrant worker abroad do. For example, that worker would at most have to talk with his employer or manager, but we tour guides have to deal with various strata of social life, like foreign lawmakers, famous actors and actresses, entrepreneurs. We can learn about their concepts and attitudes but need to be knowledgeable and informative on our part as well. Their behaviour is worthy of imitation sometimes, but not always. For example, they would not solve a problem in persistence with their eyes closed. If something is justifiably explained, it becomes acceptable to them. And they recognize and enforce rights and entitlements of a person without discrimination as to class or stratum. These are their good points.

But they are very weak in familial ties. For example, they would go on a long journey leaving their old parents at home. When parents are on their deathbed in a hospital we Myanmarers are usually there. Under similar circumstances a foreigner would not rush home but phone up their ailing parent to say words of encouragement and would continue their holiday trip. I was once witness to the experience of a foreign couple: Husband dies on the mountainside way to Kyaikhtyoe Pagoda, but his wife, after seeing

to the necessary arrangements for her flight, continued the trip. I do not like such a mindset. I love Myanmar emotion and am attracted to foreigner's reasoned decisiveness.

How do you see Tourism prospects?

I think very well of the changes in Tourism effected by state leaders. Tourist arrivals will hopefully grow for Myanmar's becoming better known and focused. Foreign investment in abundance will make for extensive Myanmar development but it is worrisome that Myanmar might become an underclass of workers under foreigners. Therefore I much appreciate the help being given by veteran businesspeople and banks to young Myanmar entrepreneurs of real potential. I expect them to see them in the future with foreigners in their employ.

Does Tint Tint Travels & Tours cater for others besides Germans?

Initially I focussed on German-speaking people only, but later established many contacts in Singapore, Malaysia, Italy, France, Britain,

US, etc, let alone my marketing schedule in Europe and our Website. Foreigners are coming in more than projected.

How do you train your Guides?

A good number of them are my friends and peers. There is almost no need to train them.

Your outlook on Guides?

Most people think Guide's work has great pecuniary benefit. In fact, they are being compensated less than enough. To relate to foreigners necessary information a good Guide needs to be well versed in politics, history and culture both internal and external. While constantly polishing one's language of choice, he/she should develop leadership qualities in the Organization. A Guide has to go for exchanges with a foreign visitor as sometime nurse, parent, or friend. His/her responsibility is big and wide. Guides should receive respect and the best response from employers and Tourism community.

What would you, at your current age and status, like to relay to others?

Mine is not a runaway success but at my level best. But I am not complacent. I would like to impart to youths some advice on spiritual uplift or a piece of experience, if not money. I would like to have them imitate my past struggle. If a youth at least reads about this interview and consequently feels some spiritual uplift, I should be delighted beyond measure.

Thank you for giving your time to this interview. ☺



INTRODUCING MYANMAR HOROSCOPE

San-Zarni Bo

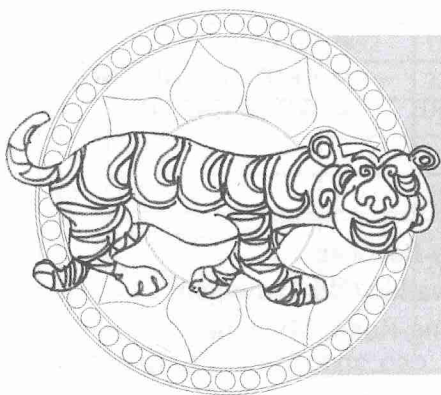
Sunday-born

The major concern within this period is money matters. You should not try to gamble in high-risk investment, or will lose a lot of money. A stranger will try to step in between you and your lovers. You will be very sorry if you don't take this matter seriously and try to settle it before it is too late. Keep an eye out for money traps. ☸



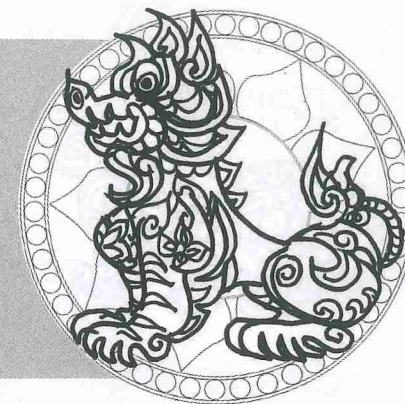
Monday-born

Although the fortune improves a little this month, there are still several career obstacles ahead. Concentrate on your own business, and not get involved in other people's. If you do, you will become the victims in a very complicated business situation. You must try not to challenge your superiors even if you don't agree with them. ☸



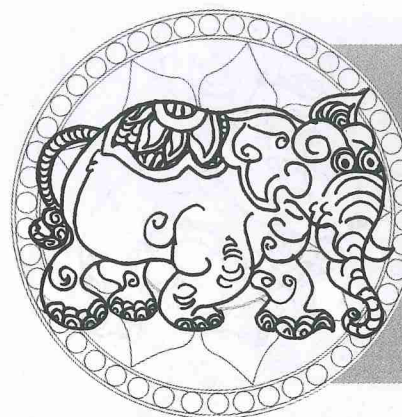
Tuesday-born

Have to fight hard for yourself because you will have no one else to rely on within this period of time. Have to bolster your determination and put all your effort into work if you want to achieve your goals. If you don't, you will miss out on a very good opportunity to upgrade your careers. ☸



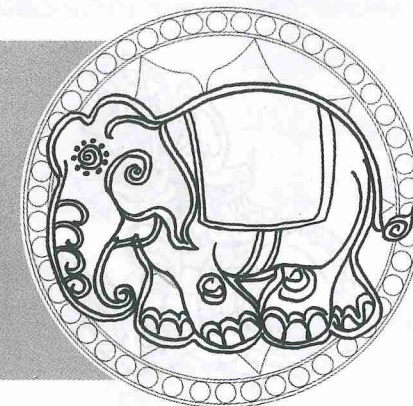
Wednesday-born (Wednesday Morning)

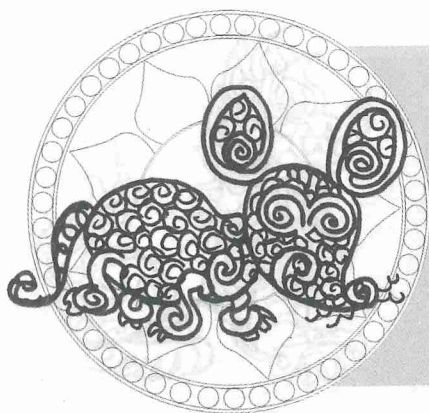
A good plan for the rest of the month will help you to overcome adversity smoothly. Will tend to get involved in illegal activities. You must try to cut out all connections with any illegal parties, or you will surely end up in goal sooner or later. It's wise for you to pay all bills as soon as possible. ☸



Rahu-born (Wednesday Evening)

You must work hard and try to keep a low profile for own self-preservation and for the future success of your career. You must watch your words carefully. Under no circumstances should you ever speak behind the backs of your superiors or colleagues. Try to uncover hidden enemies as soon as possible. ☸





Thursday-born

Enjoy unexpected income during this period. But you will be deeply disappointed if you gamble. Now comes the time for renovation at work. You should not worry too much, because there is always a first time. Will probably fall in love during this period. You will have a nice surprise if you ask for a date. ♀

Friday-born

You should not be too greedy with investments even though you may make some gains early in the month. Have to drive with extreme care, especially near month's end. Carry out projects step by step to avoid a sudden fall. You don't have too much to worry about regarding your health. ♀



Saturday-born

You will return much refreshed, and this will benefit your work and health. Gambling will lead only to total destruction, so you'd better forget all about it during this period. Actually, you will be able to get your pay-off for the long struggling at work very soon. Stand up firmly and refuse to give up under circumstances. ♀