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2004

## "Image of Myanma's Aungbarlay Lottery"



June 1938. A ticket cost Kyat 2, and winning tickets were drawn for the first prize of Kyat 100,000 and other prizes.

Winning tickets were drawn four times in a year. This practice continued even under Japanese rule during the World War II.

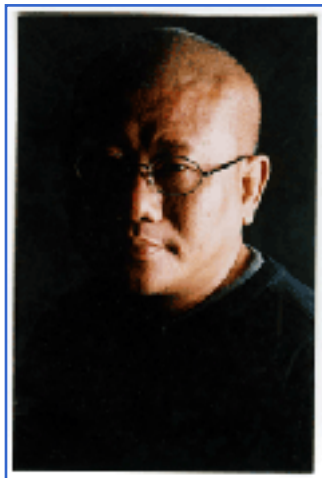
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## Rainy season is

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It's really joyful to gaze out at the falling rain, while sitting in the air-conditioned coffee shop or not having to walk across the murky water that is deep up to your ankle because you have a car.

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## Express-Script writing market in Myanmar

Nita Oo (Okkar Myay) said, "There are now script writers in Myanmar who could deliver the script in two and a half days or three days. Not in abroad, as far I know. I heard or read about the script writers in other countries who usually take six months to two years. They take time revising the script again and again."

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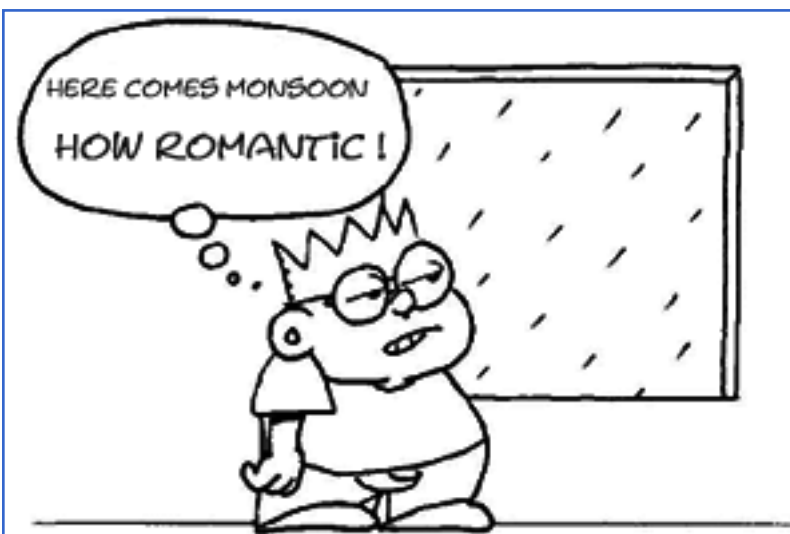
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## Let's assemble a jeep

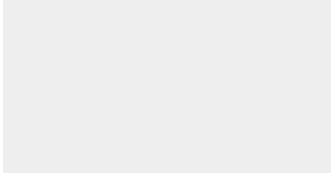
"I haven't heard of copycat among us," remarked Ko Lin Aung. Those cars are assembled at Upper and Lower Myanmar industrial zones and selling actively.

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## "Image of Myanmar's Aungbarlay Lottery"

Ko Aung Win

Myanmar's Aungbarlay Lottery is the state lottery, i.e. an officially launched lucky draw. Under the Aungbarlay Lottery system, lottery tickets are sold at a fixed price and a certain ratio of total sales proceeds are earmarked as prizes. The winning numbers are drawn, and the cash prizes are presented to owners of the tickets with the winning numbers.

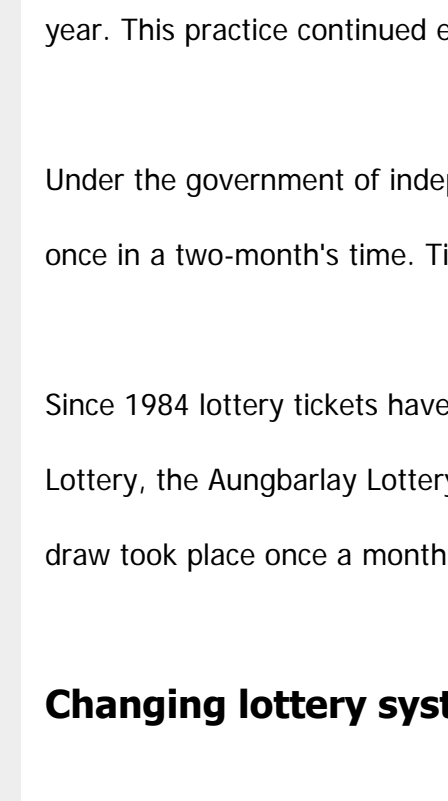
The word Htee does not seem to be a pure Myanmar word. It is presumed that the word is of Chinese or English language origin. Some people thought the word Htee is derived from Lotte. In Myanmar before the reign of King Theebaw, there was a practice of doing the lottery by the name Htee. In the world of Buddhist monks a practice like drawing the winning ticket has been established for over hundreds of years. It is known as a Traditional Festival of Wakhaung Month. Buddhists donate cash and goods for monks and they are distributed to monks through a system like lucky draw.

### History of Aungbarlay Lottery

Under the sovereignty of King Bodawpaya, who became king of Amarapura Throne in Myanmar Era 1144 (AD 1782), Myanmar learnt about English lottery system through overseas business relations. Indians' arbitration method called pyinku is similar to lottery system. When disputes occurred about trading, a lucky draw was done to evaluate the price of goods in dispute. Then the cash was distributed among the arguing parties. This practice was called pyinku.

### Consequently the king opened lottery ticket sales outlets, resulting no expected advantage and closed in ME 1243 (AD1881).

Lottery system became popular in Lower Myanmar under English colonial rule, when King Theebaw ruled Upper Myanmar (Mandalay). The 36 Animal betting of Chinese has been introduced in Royal City of Mandalay then. It would be better to collect tax through lottery system like the English government, than collecting by royal orders, King Theebaw thought. Consequently the king opened lottery ticket sales outlets, resulting no expected advantage and closed in ME 1243 (AD1881).



Under the government of independent Myanmar, beginning from 14th series of Aungbarlay Lottery, the draw took place once in a two-month's time. Tickets were sold open, and the minimal prize became Kyat700 beginning from 1967.

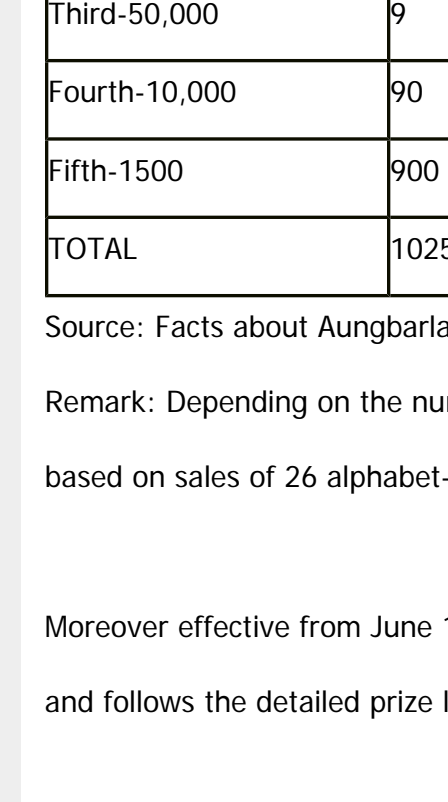
Since 1984 lottery tickets have been sold by sales permit system at Central Wholesaler of the Directorate of the State Lottery, the Aungbarlay Lottery Department. Moreover effective from 265th series, which was drawn on 1 January 1989, the draw took place once a month. This lottery system came to an end, after the draw for 266th series in March 1989.

### Changing lottery systems



Sales of 5-kyat per ticket Aungbarlay lottery was introduced on 20 December 1988, and the draw took place on 9 February 1989. K 300,000 was for the top winner and the minimal prize was K 1500.

Effective from 12th series drawn on 3 February 1990 the top prize became K 500,000. A ticket cost K 5, and a set of 11 tickets was sold at K 50 by Central Wholesaler through sales permit system. The payment was full down payment in cash. Though initially draws took place once in two-month, beginning from April 1989 it was drawn monthly. This lottery was ended in March 1991.



Ten-kyat per ticket system was introduced in April 1991 (28th series). The top prize was K 1,000,000 and the lowest K 1500. A set of 11 tickets was sold at K 100 by Central Wholesaler. Sales permit system, buyer's card system and application system were practised for sales. Cash payment only was accepted initially, though it was allowed to settle by Payment Order (PO) and Bank Remittance for payment over K 50,000. Again this monthly lottery system came to an end in December 1996 after drawing 68 times.

The significant feature of K10-per-ticket system was Mingalar Prizing System. Follows the distribution of prizes according to Mingalar Prizing System.

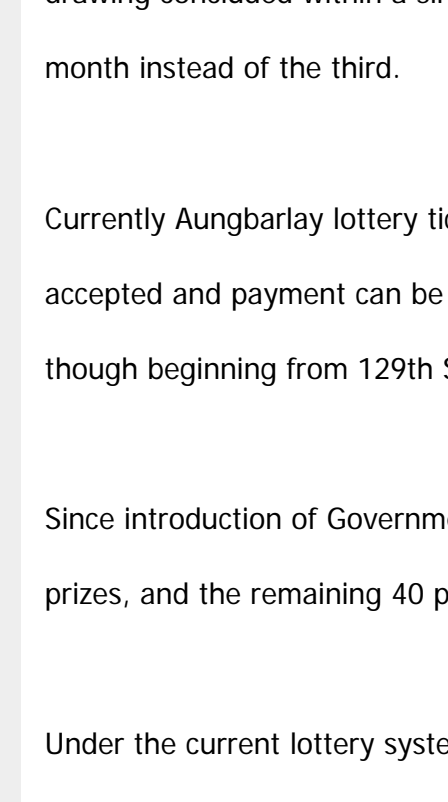
Value of Prize (K)	No. of prize	Prize (K)	Remark
First - 300,000	1	300,000	e.g. A-123456
Second-100,000	25	2,500,000	Different alphabet and the same 6 digit series of 1st prize ticket
Third-50,000	9	450,000	Different alphabet and the same first 5 digit of 1st prize ticket
Fourth-10,000	90	900,000	Different alphabet and the same first 4 digit of 1st prize ticket
Fifth-1500	900	1,350,000	Different alphabet and the same first 3 digit of 1st prize ticket
TOTAL	1025	5,500,000	

Source: Facts about Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.  
 Remark: Depending on the number of alphabet, total value of cash prizes may be changed. The above-mentioned table is based on sales of 26 alphabet-series.

Moreover effective from June 1991, additional prize unit system was introduced. A single additional unit brings 200 prizes and follows the detailed prize list.

Value of Prize (K)	No. of prize	Prize (K)	Remark
First-200,000	1	200,000	Effective from 3 January 1993,
Second-40,000	5	200,000	K40,000 prize was increased to
Third-20,000	10	200,000	K80,000; K20,000 to K40,000;
Fourth-5000	24	120,000	K5000 to K20,000 and K3000 to
Fifth-3000	160	480,000	K5000.
TOTAL	200	1,200,000	

Source: Facts about Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.



Beginning from December 1996, K50-per-ticket lottery system was introduced and the draw took place in January 1997. The top prize was K 5,000,000 and the lowest K 10,000. Value of Mingalar Prizing System prizes were altered effective from 17 March 1997. Follows the prize distribution list for a single additional unit of Mingalar Prizing System, which covers sales of 20 alphabet-series.

Value of Prize (K)	No. of prize	Prize (K)	Remark
First - 5,000,000	1	5,000,000	e.g. A-123456
Second-600,000	19	11,400,000	Different alphabet and the same 6 digit series of 1st prize ticket
Third-100,000	9	900,000	Different alphabet and the same first 5 digit of 1st prize ticket
Fourth-50,000	90	4,500,000	Different alphabet and the same first 4 digit of 1st prize ticket
Fifth-10,000	900	9,000,000	Different alphabet and the same first 3 digit of 1st prize ticket
TOTAL	1019	30,800,000	

Source: Facts about Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.

Moreover prizes of the additional unit system were altered.

Value of Prize (K)	No. of prize	Prize (K)	Remark
First - 500,000	1	500,000	
Second-400,000	2	800,000	
Third-200,000	7	1,400,000	
Fourth-80,000	10	800,000	
Fifth-40,000	20	800,000	
Sixth-20,000	160	3,200,000	
TOTAL	200	7,500,000	

Source: Facts about Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.

As an incentive to lottery-lovers a special prize of K 10,000,000 was introduced in November 1999. This prize comes from a certain part of State fund which consists of lottery prizes which were not claimed within a year from the date of prize announcement. Beginning from June 2000, cash amount of the special prize was increased to become K 30,000,000. For this prize, K 20,000,000 comes from 60% of sales proceed, which is earmarked for cash prizes; and K 10,000,000 from the (above-mentioned) State fund.

Previously it took 7 days to draw the winning tickets, starting from 3rd day of the month. However since 165th Series, the drawing concluded within a single day. Then effective from 166th Series drawing date has become the first day of the month instead of the third.

Currently Aungbarlay lottery tickets are on sale open to all at Central Wholesaler of Directorate of State Lottery. Cash is not accepted and payment can be settled only by payment orders (P.O.) Previous PO issued by private banks were accepted, though beginning from 129th Series only those POs issued by State-owned Myanmar Economic Bank have been accepted.

Since introduction of Government lottery on 1 June 1938, 60 percent of lottery sales proceeds has been earmarked for prizes, and the remaining 40 percent goes to the State Fund.

Under the current lottery system a single alphabet of the ticket number is used for 81,818 sets of lottery tickets, i.e. a single alphabet covers 899,998 tickets. Number of alphabets sold, total sales income, cash amount of prizes and details of prize distribution can be learnt by studying 183rd Series Aungbarlay Lottery drawing.

### A glimpse of current lottery system

Lottery tickets bringing 36 alphabets were sold for 183rd Series of Aungbarlay Lottery. Each alphabet on tickets covers 81,818 sets (of 11 tickets) amounting to total sales income to K 40,909,000 at a rate of k 500 per set. For this event tickets with 36 alphabets were sold realizing the total income of K 1,472,724,000 (K 1.47 billion). Out of that income the Government got 40% as tax amounting to K 589,089,600 and the remaining 60% amounting to K 883,634,400 will become lottery prizes. For the 183th Series, prizes for a single unit of K 5,000,000 Mingalar prizing system were distributed as follows.

Value of Prize (K)	No. of prize	Prize (K)	Remark
First - 5,000,000	1	5,000,000	
Second-600,000	35	21,000,000	Different alphabet and the same 6 digit series of 1st prize ticket
Third-100,000	9	900,000	Different alphabet and the same first 5 digit of 1st prize ticket
Fourth-50,000	90	4,500,000	Different alphabet and the same first 4 digit of 1st prize ticket
Fifth-10,000	900	9,000,000	Different alphabet and the same first 3 digit of 1st prize ticket
TOTAL		40,400,000	

Source: Facts about Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.

That is why prize distribution for 183rd Series became as follows:  
 K 30,000,000 prize from 60% of sales income - K 20,000,000 (K10,000,000 from a certain State Fund)  
 10 prizes of K 5,000,000 - 50,000,000  
 12 prizes of K 2,500,000 - 30,000,000  
 19 units of Mingalar Prizing System - 767,600,000  
 2 units of additional prizes - 15,000,000  
 TOTAL - 882,600,000

Source: Facts about 183rd Series of Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.

The total amount for prizes was aimed to be K 883,634,400. So additional prizes were distributed from the remaining cash.

K 200,000 prize	1	200,000
K 80,000 prize	4	320,000
K 40,000 prize	6	240,000
K 20,000 prize	13	260,000
TOTAL	24	1,020,000
Credited to State Fund		14,400
TOTAL		1,034,400

Source: Facts about 183rd Series of Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.

Follows the breakdown 20,112 prizes distributed at 183rd Series.

K 30,000,000 special prize	1
K 5,000,000 prize	10
K 2,500,000 prize	12
K 5 million Mingalar Set	19 units
X 1035 prizes for a unit	19,665
Additional 2 units X 200 prizes	400
Remaining additional prizes	24
TOTAL	20,112

Source: Facts about 183rd Series of Aungbarlay Lottery, by Directorate of State Lottery, Internal Revenue Department.

### Lottery lovers

A huge portion of lottery lovers in Myanmar do the lottery earnestly. Some people have enough money to buy set of 100 tickets, set of 1000 tickets, and 10 sets of Mingalar tickets (bringing the same number in all alphabets sold), while majority people buy sets of 2 tickets, 5 tickets and 10 tickets. That is why small as well as big lottery shops are scattered throughout the country. Some of them simply try their luck, while some others choose their favourite alphabet and numbers. Those who follow future-tellers' predictions to choose the ticket number, buying date and time, and a specific lottery shop form a considerable amount of lottery lovers. The number and value of lottery prizes are growing and so are the lottery lovers. The growth of lottery sales business proves the fact.

The astrologers, who move around with cars to sell special predictions to do the lottery, are good witnesses as well. They freely persuade their prospective customers to follow their predictions stating ticket number, buying date and time, lottery shop, type of dress and colour to wear when buying lottery. However you cannot get it free of charge but you have to pay a fee ranges from K2700 to 9000. A lottery lover shared his personal experience. A common prediction for a year costs just K50, so the man was really shocked when he faced such experience. Actually an astrologer approached you to offer free prediction, and eventually you have to pay a high fee for the prediction. Such kind of astrologers even offers to enter into a contract stating you must win a prize in the lottery.

A lottery lover from Shwepyitha satellite town of Yangon has been regularly doing the lottery over the last five years, and won K20,000 prize several times. He shared his experience: "Previously my job income was not good. Then I could only buy sets of 2 or 5-ticket. Later when I got a job with high income I could buy sets of 10-ticket and Mingalar set (tickets bring a single number with all alphabets issued). The prices of Mingalar sets are very expensive." He prefers offering more prizes to offering higher value of prize. He thought 3 prizes of K10,000,000 or 2 prizes of K15,000,000 is better than offering a special prize of K30,000,000. That will make more number of lottery winners. The claimed prizes, which become a part of the State fund, should be spend for K300-400 per set, as 40% of tax has been paid for the cash. However he does not like offering of incentives by large-scale lottery shops. The lottery prizes are increased to do so, he commented. Sets of lottery ticket - Mingalar set, and other sets of 2, 5 and 10-ticket, should be sold at a reasonable price. So majority people can afford to buy the tickets, he continued his remark.

Anyhow he does not like offering of to do so, he commented.

Another lottery lover living at Pazuntaung Township in Yangon never does illegal lottery. He had won lottery prizes, amount to K20,000 at the most, several times over the last decade. He routinely does lottery monthly. When Mingalar sets were available he only bought Mingalar sets only ranges from a set to six. He laughingly commented: "I like Aungbarlay lottery. It doesn't matter if I win high prize or not. It is good to win a big prize, if not I just think of it as my contribution as a citizen to the State fund." He do not accept the concept of reduction of cash amount of prizes to give more prizes. He would like offering lottery prizes of higher value, if possible. Concerning incentives being offered by large-scale lottery shops, he accepted the practice. He said, "Let them offer incentives, and let them make reasonable profits. But, making too much profit is not good."

According to this lottery lover, lottery is just a matter of luck. Those who win high prizes are very lucky and they should get prizes as well as incentives of the lottery shops. He could have a chance to observe a loose-disciplined office staff at southern Myanmar. This government employee, who won K 20,000,000 lottery prize, had changed his life drastically. He became religiously devoted person; consequently his behavior also had been remarkably altered. "Good luck brings good events. Not only bad luck, good luck also brings many consequences," the lottery lover remarked.

Majority of lottery lovers appreciate his opinion, i.e. increase of value of lottery prizes. On the other hand most of the lottery lovers wish to see lottery shops selling at cheaper prices.

### Large-scale lottery shops

Large-scale lottery shops or their owners serve as media between the state-owned Aungbarlay lottery department and lottery lovers. They know market situation, demand, distribution and prize fluctuation related to lottery very well. Some of the large-scale lottery shop owners are being consulted by Government lottery department, and sometimes they are given warning as well. As such wholesalers are playing an important role, you cannot ignore their role and activities in lottery business.

In 183rd series of lottery Aungsuhtopaing lottery shop stood top among prize-winning-ticket sellers. They have been running the lottery sales as a family business since the time when a ticket cost K2. Then they make a profit of K2 per set of 11 tickets. However a son, who is currently running the lottery shop, reminded that this income covered the living cost of their family, at that time. Then Mandalay Shanminthar and Aungsuapan were top lottery shops.

Aungsuhtopaing has recently become a wholesaler. Until then they bought tickets from government lottery department and arranged to form Mingalar set of lottery tickets. Then they sold the sets to large-scale wholesalers. They could not make a big profit though, the wholesalers who attached their brands made a significant profit. Those large-scale shops could realize a profit of K300-400 per set resulted in a monthly profit of K30-40 million at least. Moreover those wholesalers got a good chance to establish their brands, when some tickets they sold won top prizes. That was why Aungsuhtopaing tried to reach this level of large-scale wholesalers.

The lottery system seems flawless due to frequent meetings between proprietors of major lottery sales centres and the government lottery department. However a prominent lottery merchant wished to see a more advanced lottery system in Myanmar, for instance, lottery lovers could try their luck at any place and could draw cash prizes at any convenient place as well.

When queried about incentives, Aungsuhtopaing lottery shop owner continued to say that it was a nice thing, otherwise the government lottery department might have unsold tickets. Concerning incentive of K30 million for winner of K30 million prize, Aungsuhtopaing had formed a fund with other leading four lottery sellers. If a K30 million prize winner is one of their customers of that five shops, they contribute proportionately based on their respective sales income, to give an incentive of K30 million. That was how they save the burden of offering a big incentive, the owner of Aungsuhtopaing said.




Moeyan Shwelamin and Myatsukaday, who had become a top wholesaler from a small-scale retailer around 1980, said prices of lottery was decreasing in 184th Series. A Mingalar set of (34 tickets with different alphabets) lottery, which cost K1700 without the cost for packing and service, were available at around K1500, the owner said. He thought the current lottery system is the best. 2002-03 is the best selling period for Moeyan lottery shop. Due to long Thingyan (water festival) holidays and weekend holidays in April lottery sales in 184th series decreased, the owner of Moeyan said.

Most of the lottery shop owners said without offering incentives, lottery sales would be fallen for sure. Owner of Moeyan shop confirmed the fact. He continued that they offered incentives on their own, and made no cooperation with other sellers.

Source: "Myanmar Encyclopedia" Vol.5, and "Facts about Aungbarlay Lottery" published by State Lottery Directorate, Internal Revenue Department.

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## "Rainy season is ....."

**Zaya Ohn and Nyein Moe Kyi Aung**

When I was young, I felt full of the joys of springs at the rainy seasons. I would enjoy playing football in the rain. Under the shelter of the house, I would scribble my thoughts which were the mixture of poem and prose while watching the raindrops fell. Rainy season was joyous occasions and romantic while in my carefree days as a youth. But when I got matured, rainy seasons were not romantic anymore nor joyful occasions for me.

We, who have no car of our own, have to commute everyday, while getting wet all the way. Hawkers, Trishaw drivers, Housewives etc, like the while collar labor will have to endure the rainy season in frustration. Some people will get soaked even in the rainy nights.

**It's really joyful to gaze out at the falling rain, while sitting in the air-conditioned coffee shop or not having to walk across the murky water that is deep up to your ankle because you have a car.**

The rice cultivators will be filled with joy in the rainy season. For the old and young people whose feet need not get wet during the rainy season will find the rainy season a cheerful season. It's really joyful to gaze out at the falling rain, while sitting in the air-conditioned coffee shop or not having to walk across the murky water that is deep up to your ankle because you have a car.

Let's listen to the pre- monsoon heart beats of the people in the same boat who could not afford to get romantic but have to endure the rainy season.

### **What did U Aung Kyaw Oo, who runs the small café named "Phyu Hnin Wai", say?**

It's only after the first rain fell that I started to repair the shop. My shop lies on the side of the road so I could not have the permanent roof but the temporary roofing. Not convenient in the rainy season, particularly the seating problem. When the rain falls, the customers sitting outside of the shop comes in and need to be accommodated inside the shop.

### **U Kyaw Win, the carpenter who lives in one of the satellite city mentioned as below.**

I have three children. When the schools reopen, I need to arrange the school uniform; text books and exercise books; umbrella; raincoats; slipper for them. When do I need to prepare? The schools will be re-opened soon. I need to arrange one month ahead. The cost of sending three children to school is expensive. I am afraid that I might not make the arrangement in time. I have to save well in advance. I don't my child to lose face at the school.

### **Please go through what Daw Mya Khin, the old woman, who sells boiled corncobs evaluated.**

My daughter goes to Thiri Minagal market at one in the morning to buy the fresh corncobs. My responsibility is to walk along the streets and sell the boiled corncobs. Business is sluggish because the profit is low in the rainy season. The fresh corncobs are not available sometimes in the rainy season. Then, I have to stay at home.

### **Excerpt from what U Myint Soe, the Trishaw driver, said.**

Essentials things for our job are rain coat; bamboo hat etc. I use mainly those things. Rainy season is not a good season for us. Less people go out so less customers for us. We started preparing for the rainy season not later than May. It hard to earn money so better make the preparation earlier.

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**Trans: Lutha Kyaw**



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## "Express-Script writing market in Myanmar"

Ko Myo



Scriptwriter Myint Oo Oo Myint

Current movie community in Myanmar gives priority only to the film stars when making a feature movie or video movie. That attitude could be applied to both movie goers and the movie industry. Even the status of the directors who were once coined as "The King of the Set" decline to "The Constitutional Monarchy" when they deal with the film stars. The role of other technicians in the movie industry became obscured inclusive of the scriptwriters.

### Fees

Movie goers are usually unaware of the scriptwriters. In Myanmar, the movie goers appreciate only the value of actors and actresses whom they could see physically on screen and in public places. Then, what about the attitude of the movie industry? Nita Oo (Okkar Myay), the scriptwriter, in explaining his calculation on the fees said, "If what the actor receives is Kyat 100, then the actress earns approximately from Kyat 50 to 70. The Director is paid from Kyat 10 to 20 and the scriptwriter gets Kyat 1 to 2.50. Some scriptwriters barely makes Kyat 0.50. These are the nearest though not the accurate figures, he added. He has written about 35 scripts for the video movies.

The established scriptwriter, Myint Oo Oo Myint, in expressing his feeling, said that apart from language difference and culture difference, there is also a difference in their income.

It could be said that the scriptwriters are earning more than in the past. Some movie producers dare not bargain with the film stars who are paid handsomely but are not afraid to bargain with the scriptwriters whose are paid a chicken feed. Myint Oo Oo Myint who wrote the scripts for the famous feature films and video movie such as Myit Doe Ei Mar Yar (The deceit of the rivers); A Lin Pyawt Kaung Kin (Fade sky); Khwe Myi Kaut Ba Aye (Unalterable Ba Aye); Kyan Sit Min (King Kyan Sittha) said "There are people who like to have Mohinga with fried Gourd; boiled duck egg; and duck blood so that the Mohinga tastes the best. If they want to bargain with the bill only after finishing the Mohinga, I want to tell them that they need to pay a good price if they want to have the best." That is the artist's belief.

### In just two or three days

Nita Oo (Okkar Myay) said, "There are now scriptwriters in Myanmar who could deliver the script in two and a half days or three days. Not in abroad, as far I know. I heard or read about the scriptwriters in other countries who usually take six months to two years. They take time revising the script again and again."

Nita Oo (Okkar Myay) said, "There are now scriptwriters in Myanmar who could deliver the script in two and a half days or three days. Not in abroad, as far I know. I heard or read about the scriptwriters in other countries who usually take six months to two years. They take time revising the script again and again."

In Myanmar, some producers who want to cut down the budget usually hire the scriptwriter who will deliver the script in no time and charge the trifling amount for the service. Numerous foreign movies are available on VCDs and through the satellite receivers. So, the raw material is really abundant at almost no cost for the scriptwriter who prefers the easy way.

One of the easy going scriptwriters who get a story from Chinese movie; another from Indian movie; and another from blending the Chinese and Indian movie contended that Myanmar pioneer movies also were the adapted version of the foreign movies.

Nita Oo (Okkar Myay) explained that the role of the scriptwriter is not expected to become more significant in the future. He explained, "For various reasons, the Directors starts to write the script. In another case, the famous director who wins the Academy award as the best director has a team set up of four or five scriptwriters. Each of the scriptwriters writes four or five chapters each under the supervision of that famous director who acts as a team captain. Scripts are now written in this way. In the future one will see a team of scriptwriters in the shooting studio, wearing a uniform."

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**Trans: Aung Kyaw Oo**

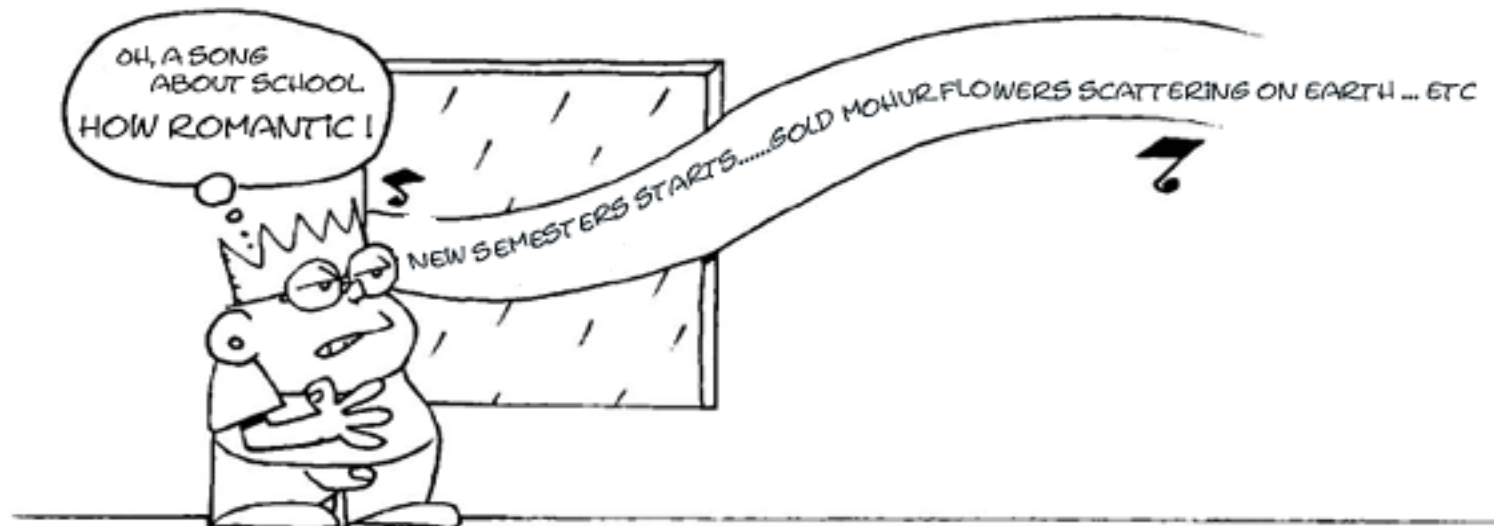


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## "Let's assemble a jeep"

Win Kyaw Oo

Car import has been restricted in Myanmar for almost a decade, though, the market demand is increasing yearly. In order to meet the growing demand, car assembly jobs are being carried out locally through the joint effort of local entrepreneurs and the government.

During 2002-03 fiscal year (i.e. April to March) 458 cars, exceeding the target by 69 cars, were assembled, according to the figures released by Myanmar Industrial Development Central Committee. In 2001-02, 46 cars were assembled though targeted to assemble 130 cars. Compared to that year 500% growth was realized in car assembly during 2002-03, as stated in the statistics. However in the last fiscal year of 2003-04, assembly of 762 cars was realized at the end of February, though the target figure was 2476, the committee said.

### Due to cars from border area

Over the last 10 months car manufacturing has been reduced by 50%, said a car assembly workshop owner at Ayethayar Industrial Zone, Taunggyi (Shan State). Ko Ye Naing Htay of Kanbawza Super Jeep Manufacturing said: "The prices were getting low over the last 10 months." Last year the car priced Kyat 20 million and Kt 9 million were reduced to be priced Kyat 13.5 million and 9 million Kyat respectively. "We can enjoy a narrow profit margin, because the average price of car parts getting low by 20% as well," added Ko Ye Naing Htay. Previously they have the cars assembled, but at present they start to assemble only when they receive purchase order, he continued.

Jeeps have been assembled at seven industrial zones at Upper Myanmar, and 11 at Lower Myanmar. More jeeps are assembled at Upper Myanmar. Mainly assembly jobs are being made at Mandalay, Taunggyi, Monywa and Meikhtilar in Upper Myanmar; and Pyi and Yangon namely - South Okkalapa, Hlaing Thayar, Tharkayta, Shwepyitha industrial zones in Lower Myanmar.

Exhibition of Locally Manufactured Cars held in last May at Mandalay made the Myanmar entrepreneurs more interested in car assembly.

### Jeeps only

Some 50 models of car including pick-ups and four-door saloons are being assembled. However most of the cars are assembled in jeep design. Car assembly workshop owners revealed the fact. Even Dagon Jeep, widely known for its quality, has to reduce the price compared to its earlier price. Ko Lin Aung, Officer in-charge of Marketing, commented: "We have been involved in cars parts trading before manufacturing these cars. That's why we can choose quality parts and accessories."

Parts like car body and seats are locally manufactured, and sophisticated parts like engine, gear box and rear-axle are imported to be assembled. He said: "75% of car parts are local products and 25% are foreign." Car engines are mainly imported from Thailand and China. "We have no preference in tyre brands, but Indonesian tyres are widely used."

Some manufacturers import car parts by themselves while others import through exporter cum importers. Myanmar Industrial Development Central Committee auctioned car parts at industrial zones from time to time. It takes 50 days at the most to assemble a car should you have all the parts and accessories on hand. Jeeps recently assembled are better than those produced earlier. They contain servo-brake system, powered steering-wheel, foam seats and enough shelter for air-conditioning system.

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"I haven't heard of copycat among us," remarked Ko Lin Aung. Those cars are assembled at Upper and Lower Myanmar industrial zones and selling actively. However the major market is based on personal friendship through business contacts. There is few incidence of market penetration between Upper and Lower Myanmar concerning assembled cars. No agent is assigned for sales of these cars.

At present Myanmar's car market is sellers' market, consequently the cars are not manufactured to meet the buyers' needs. Actually buyers bought the innovative works of sellers, as an alternative or a bizarre thing. Dagon Jeep, for instance, was initially installed with square head lamp. Later it was installed with round head lamp, and buyers are interested again to own these cars with round headlamp. Those who buy locally manufactured cars are the young people who love trendy things, those rich people and the government departments like the Forest Department and the Police Force. "Jeeps are very tough. You can use it for either short trip or long journey," said Ko Lin Aung.

### Towards development

When asked about an intention to join with other car assembly workshop owners and form a business group, resulting in a mutual interest JV with a foreign car assembly company, Ko Lin Aung replied that local entrepreneurs are not yet ready to do so.

However it would be advantageous to cooperate with other local entrepreneurs of this line. A senior marketing official of Myanmar Suzuki Co, a car assembly plant formed as a JV with the Ministry of Industry-2, analyzed: "Myanmar entrepreneurs have a considerable experience in car manufacturing. However they can have access to better technology should they have chances to form JVs with foreign companies." If workshops on car assembly and manufacturing can be held regularly through the joint effort of the entrepreneurs, then they will become a united group, the senior official continued to say.

"Now they are doing individually based on their own knowledge and experience. In the long term only those who are systematic, financially sound and competent to maintain quality will survive. Moreover such persons may probably become a competitor of Myanmar Suzuki Co," commented the senior staff of Myanmar Suzuki Co. He further remarked that smuggled a car through border and made just a minimal redesign, to be dubbed as 'own production' is undisciplined. "Such activities are adversely affecting the foreign investments and hindering the creative power of local enterprises as well."

There still are some points in contrary to market requirement. The cost of manufacturing and assembly of local jeep is almost two times higher than the cost of imported Japan-made used car, Myanmar-Suzuki official reiterated. When car prices are at low range, the local car assembly workshop will lose because the sale proceeds cannot cover their actual expenses. "It would be better to have encouragement of Government in order to have more local entrepreneurs involved in this industry."

Myanmar already has Mazda Jeep manufacturing plant and the technology. (Currently) Majority of the locally assembled jeeps may be risky for the passengers due to technical weak points. Jeeps manufactured by local private enterprises are on the market by the brands: Super Mandalay, Shan Star, Htilar and Khittayar.

Number of imported cars amounted to 3100 and 1658, in 2002 and 2003 respectively, according to the registration list of Road Transport Authority. When the local car assembly industry became a little bit more developed there will be dispute over trademark and brands among local entrepreneurs. When the industry developed furthermore local companies have to argue with established foreign jeep manufacturing companies concerning designs, as analyzed by a Myanmar advocate specializing in copy rights. # # #

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