

Vol 22: June 2018

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RURAL FUTURES

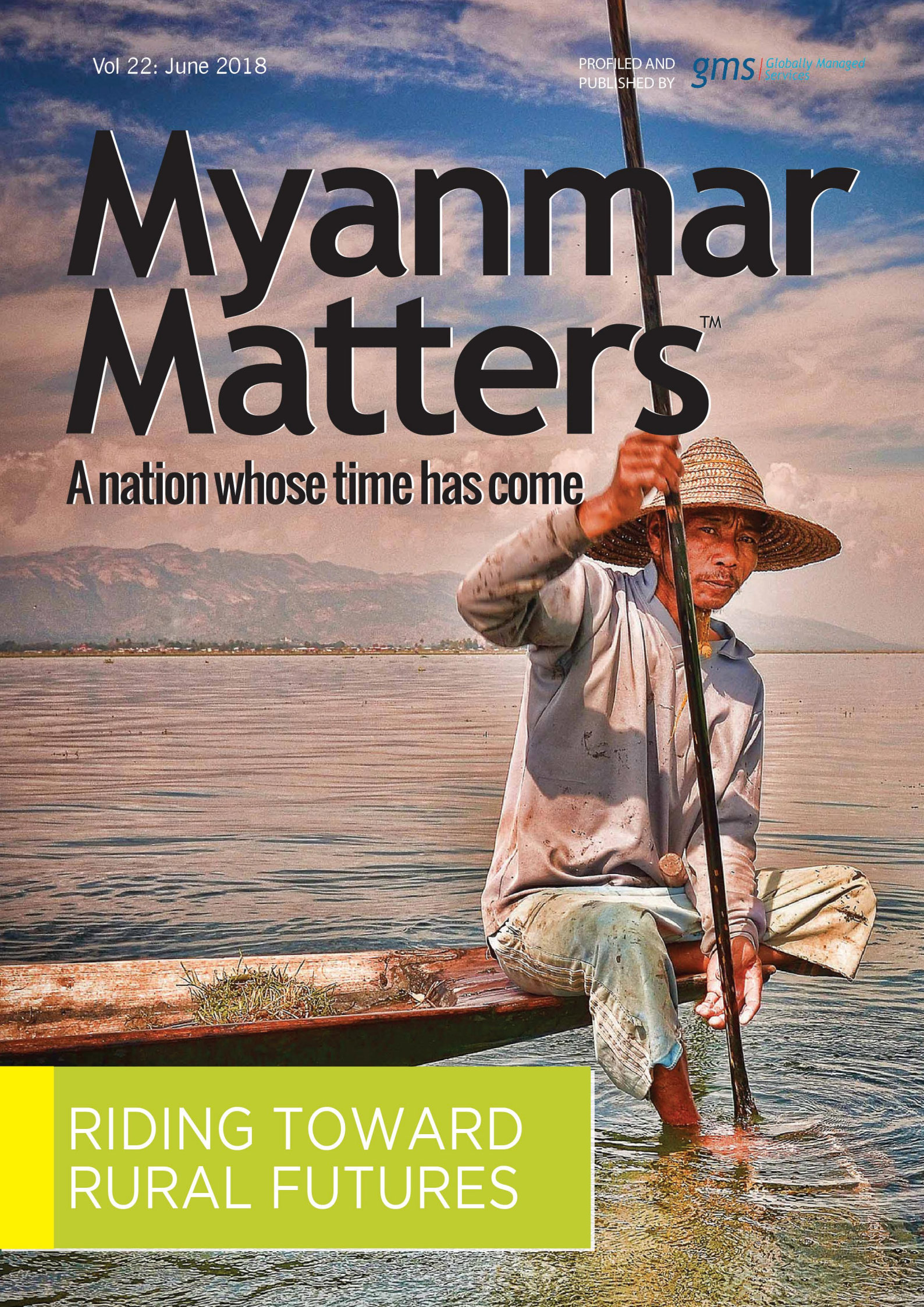




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FOREWORD



Rural Life in Eastern Himalayas

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION
TO SUPPORT EASTERN
HIMALAYAS ECOSYSTEM

Vol 22: June 2018

MYANMAR MATTERS

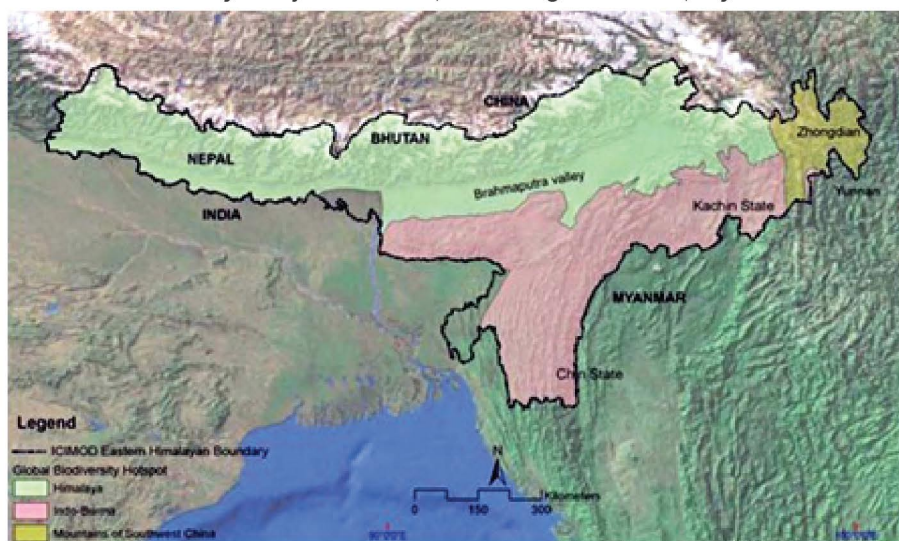
COMMUNITY CONSERVATION TO SUPPORT EASTERN HIMALAYAS ECOSYSTEM

By Ranjit Barthakur, Founding Chairman, Myanmar Matters

Eastern Himalayas, a 'Cradle of Speciation' is one of the richest areas in the world for biological diversity, it is also one of poorest regions in terms of economic development. These landscapes, besides being of global conservation significance due to their unique and rich diversity, are also home to some of the most impoverished communities in the world. Such regions are particularly vulnerable due to their ecological fragility and economic marginality. Most of the people living in the Eastern Himalayas are dependent on the goods and services provided by the biologically rich ecosystems and landscapes.

The consequences of biodiversity loss are likely to be the greatest for the poor and marginalised people who depend almost exclusively on natural resources. Poverty, poor infrastructure (roads, electricity, water supply, education and healthcare services, communication, and irrigation), reliance on subsistence farming and forest products for livelihoods, substandard health indicators and other indicators of underdevelopment make the Eastern Himalayas more vulnerable to biodiversity threats as the local capacity to adapt is inadequate. India (primarily the North Eastern states) contributes 52% of the total land area of the Eastern Himalayas. India is ranked 131 out of 188 countries by UNDP's Human Development Index

Balipara Foundation has initiated experiments in ecological protection and restoration of the Eastern Himalayan Region



through the concept of Naturenomics™. The journey to execute our vision of conserving and preserving the natural heritage of the Eastern Himalayas has evolved through a series of innovative project prototypes for conservation through interdependence. Biodiversity conservation projects have largely failed to integrate the interests of local communities, thereby alienating the largest group of shareholders. The need to integrate the concept of social

mobility into the conservation narrative is one of the primary prerequisites while working toward community conservation.

We propose that the ultimate goal of community conservation should be 're-ruralisation'. What if rural spaces had access to education, healthcare and more spacious housing than in cramped urban centres? Would people still want to move to polluted and stifling urban hubs? Our efforts directed towards



conservation and 're-ruralisation' focus on social and economic mobility essentially.

The traditional conservation practices have been preservationist in nature, which have resulted in deteriorating relationships between the officials and local communities. The critique of protectionism that emerged in the 1980s has spawned an array of conservation strategies that promote, to various degrees, the welfare and cooperation of the people living in and around protected areas. Such strategies provide a mix of conservation and development objectives and employ a range of tactics, such as providing appropriate development opportunities, emphasizing local community involvement, adopting shared management, ensuring local autonomy, guaranteeing rights to harvest, promoting knowledge, awarding cash compensation and encouraging tourism.

The ideal form of community participation would be voluntary in nature, rather than being achieved

through motivation and predictions of the apocalypse. Ensuring socio-economic security to forest communities will empower and enable communities to not just participate, but more importantly, contribute towards conservation.- Conservation Projects today categorize local communities as "beneficiaries". It makes sense only over the short-term. The long-term objective is for these communities to become "owners" of conservation projects. Therefore, the objectives of conservation projects & programs will have to include proportionate elements of social mobility togetherwith species protection & habitat restoration.

-275 million (World Bank, 2006) to 350-400 million (MoEF, 2009) people in India live around its 76.5 Million Ha of forests. That is 21-30% of the total global population of 1.3 Billion. These communities, besides being among the most impoverished and marginalized in the

country, are also the ones that will decide the fate of its bio-diversity. The Challenge to conserve biodiversity is great, but the greater challenge is to empower the people that can do so - the Forest Fringe communities.



COVER STORY



EMPOWERING INLE LAKE'S
LOCAL COMMUNITY:
THE INTHA TRIBE

EMPOWERING INLE LAKE'S LOCAL COMMUNITY: THE INTHA TRIBE

Content Courtesy – Tanya Taneja, Editor, Myanmar Matters

Immersed in pristine beauty and bounty, basking in nature's abundance, Myanmar – the land of Pagodas – has sheltered its virginal splendour for years. Its uniqueness and exclusivity lie in its intact and inclusive way of life. For long, its dissociation from extrinsic pressures has continued to balm its serenity. Situated at an elevation of 2900 feet in eastern Myanmar's Shan State - Myanmar's second largest lake - the Inle lake is a coveted jewel, resting placidly amid the mountains outlining it. Known for its floating vegetable gardens and its native dwellers - the Intha tribe's distinct manner of rowing the boats, the lake is a striking sight for the travellers around.

"The situation now is different," remarked a native of Min Chaung East Village. Reminiscing the good old days, he spoke of the abundance with which the lake was blessed with, "You could drink the water in the middle of the lake when you got thirsty. You could swim. Fish was abundant, and drought in the summer was unheard of."

The still waters of the lake no more resonate with the tranquil bounty it once boasted of. Its health is deteriorating and its area is dwindling drastically. Its resources are under stress and the likelihood of its recuperation from the state of affliction seems dry. Anthropogenic pressures have littered it with chemicals, pesticides and excessive fertilizers, making its embedded filtration unfit for the purpose. This has had a detrimental impact on the fishes and the snail species endemic to the lake which, in turn, has disoriented the lake's ecosystem from delivering its natural services



Stilted houses on Inle Lake

productively. With these species harmed – also considered a major source of income and trade – the local communities residing along the shore suffer from a dire lack of livelihood options.

Inle lake's economy depends on its well-nourished ecological health, however, Intha community's constant dependence on tree wood has challenged the environmental sustainability of the lake and the region around it. The daily routine of the Intha people required them to use traditional gas stoves to prepare their staple snack food: rice crackers. This was manually constructed with least adherence to its method of construction, the material used, the monetary burden it exposed them to, and most significantly, the imminent environmental damage it begot. Continuous deforestation to attain fuel wood has ravaged the lake's ecological health causing rampant occasions of soil erosion and sedimentation. Heath perils stemming from cursory construction of these ill-equipped stoves added to the distress, escalating cases of pneumonia and other severe ailments.

To ameliorate the condition of the local lives around the lake, UNDP in conjunction with local forest groups carved a conservation strategy. Introducing them to an efficient, inexpensive and a safer manufacturing model, UNDP aided in producing stoves riding high on these three principles, mitigating the ill effects of a conventional gas stove.

With this sentiment intact, UNDP' 's alternate stoves rested on rice husks and corn cobs to fuel its preparation of rice crackers. With wood dispensed and disregarded as the fuel component in making these stoves work, the environmental concern of deforestation reduced with communities approving and acknowledging the benefits deriving from an unconventional stove. Moreover, the steadier and firmer construction methodology adopted by UNDP comprised newer essentials such as aluminium and brick walls, shutter and a vent pipe to make it more efficient, safe and effective.

"Everything needs to be balanced. We need to preserve forests but also people need to live, cook and eat," remarked one of the villagers.

Thereby, for growth to usher in with regulated environmental impact, balance needs to precede all developmental activities; conservation and development need to be consciously measured

and assessed to progress ahead harmoniously with surmountable implications. With an unbridled burgeoning population status and unsustainable resource utilization, the challenge pervading the lake's environment lies in rescuing it from further degradation and creating a well-designed developmental model for the local people inhabiting its shores. This narrative about the Inle lake is triggered toward accomplishing a sense of equilibrium wherein the demands of development and the concerns encircling its conservation cohabit in accord. To achieve this sense of consensus, the role of local community is paramount in restoring the degraded ecosystem and preserving its biodiversity.

The effort involved in transitioning from a clay-based stove with no chimney or air circulation window to UNDP designed unconventional stove required first and foremost, the local communities to be interested in being part of this change. Thus, their utmost engagement and participation at the core level was an essential prerequisite in attaining knowledge about a newer model as well as getting skilled to dispense its benefits further to more people in the community.



As expressed by one of the villagers,

“With the old stove, the business was unsustainable. We spent 6,000 Kyats per day on firewood and for 30 Vviss of rice crackers, I would be paid 1,400 Kyats only. About a year ago, UNDP approached us and offered 120,000 Kyats (USD 120) to help construct a new, fuel-efficient stove. It was a lot of money but I reckoned it was worth it. The design was simple but it made a lot of sense – it has a chimney, has a shutter and does not waste the energy. What is more important, I no longer need to buy firewood, which means I no longer need to spend 6,000 Kyats every day. The new stove works on corn cob, which costs me only 3,000 Kyats (USD 3) per day, so I save up to 50% of the money. This is a lot for me. I have stocked up a year's supply of the corn cob. We make about 600 rice crackers per day. It is hard work. My sister spends long hours at the stove but at least there is little smoke now and it is not too hot in the kitchen as it used to be.”

This quote very well encapsulates the outcome of the community centred conservation initiative carried out by UNDP, and the willingness exhibited by the local tribe of the Inle lake in actively working towards saving the lake's ecosystem. Thus, for transformations to yield results, participatory inclusion and empowerment of the local communities – through knowledge awareness and skill enrichment – is an essential precondition.

Source Referred - Inle Lake Conservation and Rehabilitation

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BUSINESS



PERNOD RICARD TO
ENTER MYANMAR'S
SPIRITS INDUSTRY

WORLD RENOWNED
CHEMICAL COMPANY
PLANTS ITS PRODUCTION
BASE IN MYANMAR

PERNOD RICARD TO ENTER MYANMAR'S SPIRITS INDUSTRY



With instability and uncertainty becoming a constant reality of Myanmar's general ambience, global players interested in Myanmar's business environment are not willing to shy away from making newer economic engagements and relations. Myanmar alcohol industry is all set to be entertained by the entry of French wine and spirits company: Pernod Ricard – an initiative by Mr. Serge Pun, tycoon, Yoma Strategic Holdings.

Chief Executive of Pernod Ricard's Asia business, Mr. Philippe Guettat lauded Myanmar's economic progress as the brand takes strides to launch its presence in the country, taking charge of its operational management aspects like production and distribution of

whiskey in Myanmar. Being reckoned as a joint alliance with Yoma Strategic Holdings, Delta Capital Myanmar, Win Brothers, the Paris based spirits company would hold maximum shares in the venture.

The joint statement of the companies involved read, "Pernod Ricard is the world's second-largest wine and spirits company, and its market entry represents the first time that a major global producer of wine and spirits has established a formal presence in Myanmar." With this business arrangement in line, Myanmar's own major whiskey brand: High Class Whiskey, would become part of Pernod Ricard. Under its control, the High Class Whiskey brand is expected to grow and strengthen. In this process, it's also

anticipated that Pernod Ricard would introduce its own whiskey labels such as Seagram's, Ballantine's and Chivas in the local market and also regulate Myanmar's own brand of Access Myanmar Distribution Company entirely under its own management. Yoma Strategic's CEO Mr. Melvyn Pun remarked, "We are delighted that High Class Whisky will become part of the Pernod Ricard family alongside a portfolio of leading brands. Pernod Ricard brings a strong commitment to the local market, with best practices in distribution, marketing and production that will meaningfully strengthen our operations."

WORLD RENOWNED CHEMICAL COMPANY PLANTS ITS PRODUCTION BASE IN MYANMAR

Provider of sustainable chemical solutions: BASF has established its manufacturing unit in Asia Pacific's most progressive region – Myanmar. Committed to facets of construction, maintenance, repair and renovation, BASF's purpose of establishing its production facility in Myanmar correlates to the exceeding demand being uttered by the infrastructural developments in Myanmar. Prior to this development, BASF's presence in Myanmar had already been noted through its import supplies to the country as well as with its representative office being opened in Yangon in 2015.

With the intent to meet country's industrialization, urbanisation and infrastructural construction chemical needs, BASF brings to the table its high quality customised admixtures to serve the intended purpose under the brand 'Masters Builders Solutions'. The newly opened plant is armed with facilities like laboratory, warehousing and production units and is tactically located in East Dagon Township, near Thilawa Sea Port, Yangon Sea Port and Yangon International Airport. Thereby, geographically situated in close proximity to the region where its raw materials can be made available on immediate basis.

Managing Director of BASF in Thailand Mr. Petrus Ng expressed, "The opening of the new plant in East Dagon Township marks another milestone for us as we expand our manufacturing footprint in a new market and support the rapid growth of Myanmar's construction industry with durable and energy-efficient products."

Globally significant, the company

has been part of major construction marvels around the world – Yeywa Hydroelectric dam and Thilawa Special Economic Zone of Myanmar, Burj Khalifa of Dubai and multiple other structures have been credited to it. Christian Mombaur, BASF's Regional Unit Head stated, "As Myanmar's construction industry

grows more sophisticated in its scope, which includes high-rise buildings, roadways and bridges, the requirement for high-quality technical and construction chemical solutions will increase. We can draw on our decades of experience in the region and around the world to support Myanmar's development in this important sector."



INVESTMENT



YANGON EXHIBITS ITS
INVESTMENT POTENTIAL
TO THE WORLD

COFFEE GIANT
STARBUCKS TO
ENTER MYANMAR

YANGON EXHIBITS ITS INVESTMENT POTENTIAL TO THE WORLD



Yangon Chief Minister – Phyo Min Thein

Recently an investment event was hosted by Myanmar's commercial capital – Yangon, inviting local and global investors to tap onto the investment potential of the region. Themed 'Yangon Region: Investment Hub in Myanmar', the forum was jointly organized by YRIC - The Yangon Region Investment Committee, DICA -The Department of Investment and Company Administration, and subsidiary organizations like RICE, MAX HOTEL, PwC, GIZ backed the forum in their supportive capacity. Yangon's Chief Minister Mr. Phyo Min Thein while speaking at the event remarked, "Yangon is the economic epicentre of Myanmar and the potential for growth is tremendous. What some might consider challenges, we see as opportunities."

Exploding with business possibilities, the event beckoned business leaders from around the world with delegates from Asia flocking in huge numbers; more than 80% from the countries of China, India, South Korea, Singapore and Thailand participated. At the Yangon Investment forum 2018 (YIF), projects pertaining to industry, public transportation, logistics and trade, and urban development were majorly highlighted.

Ardently committed to build a greener and sustainable economy of Yangon, the regional government for the first time went ahead to conduct a forum of this sort; promoting a mutual platform for the investors and the regional authorities to engage, integrate and leverage their

economic interests in a conducive business environment. Yangon's futuristic prospects were discussed and presented in detail through the high profiled government officials speaking at the forum. Mr. Min added, "Building a smart, sustainable Yangon is part of our vision. We are committed to promoting a green economy and encourage those who want to seize investment opportunities in Yangon to forge partnerships that will lead us toward responsible and inclusive growth."

Thus, Yangon's commercial viability is well reflected through new businesses advancing their way to this region with the view to tap onto the investment prospects its buzzing with.

COFFEE GIANT STARBUCKS TO ENTER MYANMAR



Myanmar is in for a coffee treat with Starbucks announcing its presence in Yangon, the capital city of Myanmar. US based coffee chain is all set to introduce its flavours to this Southeast Asian country, with its first outlet being opened at Sule Square Mall in the Kyautada township of Yangon.

Expanding its chain across the globe, Starbucks had been gearing to steer ahead by planning its presence in Myanmar, slated to be its next big investment destination. In 2013, Starbucks' former CEO Mr. Howard Schultz made a remark vis-a-vis brand's keen interest in enhancing its reach to Myanmar. Apart from Laos, Starbucks has gripped the Southeast Asian sphere completely

now, with its recent launch in Myanmar. Although other international coffee houses already have themselves positioned in the country: Australia's Gloria Jean's; Singapore's The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf; and Taiwan's Chaitime. Thus, with Starbucks making its way into the Myanmar beverage market, boom in the coffee culture is quite evident.

Not only would the consumers of coffee be in for a treat; the coffee farmers would too benefit from this economic venture; a partnership of some sort with local coffee planters is anticipated to broaden the scope and scale of local employment prospects. As remarked by one of the spokesperson of the

the brand is enthusiastic about engaging with Myanmar's local brands while bringing to the table its high-end products.

Directorate of Investment and Company Administration registered Coffee Concepts Myanmar Ltd. (CCM) in December 2017. CCM has been authorised by Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) to carry forth Starbucks sales and operations in Myanmar.

NATION NEWS



ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN MYANMAR & CHINA TO BOOST

Vol 22: June 2018

MYANMAR MATTERS

ECONOMIC TIES BETWEEN MYANMAR & CHINA TO BOOST

With the quest to boost bilateral and economic relations between the countries of Myanmar and China, a two-day event from 17th to 19th May was organised in the commercial city of Yangon at the Myanmar Event Park. The event manifested the zeal evinced by both the neighbours in integrating and learning from their economic and commercial strengths.

Myanmar's Union Minister for Commerce Dr. Than Myint remarked, "The event aimed at promoting bilateral trade and investment and enhancing Myanmar-China cooperation, introducing high-quality Made-in-China products for the Myanmar market."

This would serve as a common platform enabling both the countries to share their commercial products and comprehend the investment landscape existing in both. While Myanmar placed products of fishery, agriculture, handicrafts and food on display, China's expertise was highlighted through its exhibition of hardware, lighting products, vehicles, motorcycles, construction material, industry equipment etcetera. Being part of the China-ASEAN Expo, this trade fair held the possibility of aiding in the process of building the modern economic corridor.

The event had multiple organisers to itself: China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO), Myanmar Trade Promotion Organisation, Worldex-SingEx Exhibitions (Guangzhou) Co. Ltd, and Trade Development Bureau (TDB) of Ministry of Commerce of China (MYANTRADE).



Dr. Than Myint
Myanmar's Union Minister for Commerce

The organisers were supported by UMFCCI and Chinese Embassy's Economic and Commercial Counsellor's Office.

Myanmar has confirmed its participation in three international Expos being held in China, comprising the 25th Kunming Import Export Fair in June, the 15th China-ASEAN Expo in September, and the Shanghai Import Expo in November 2018.

Reckoned to connect the Chinese and Myanmar traders with the intent to engage and enhance their bilateral exchange, the first ever exhibition of CAEXPO in

Myanmar during this trade fair is certainly a significant step in fuelling economic futures of both the neighbouring countries.

TOURISM



Village life near Pindaya

PINDAYA - INLE LAKE'S OFFBEAT TRAVEL SPOT

PINDAYA – INLE LAKE’S OFFBEAT TRAVEL SPOT

Pindaya is usually only a distant speck on the destination horizon for most travellers heading to Myanmar's tourist hotspot — Inle Lake in Shan State. Some swing by on a day trip. Being awestruck by Shwe Min Oo Cave's more than 8000 images of Buddha, travellers move on. However, Pindaya has much more to offer – for tourists and expats alike.

Located at just a 90-minute drive from the Inle Lake, Pindaya is even closer to He Ho, the region's airport. Therefore, the destination is surely an accessible weekender for Yangonites. With around 8,000 overnight visitors last year, it's a perfect 'less travelled' destination and can easily be added to a vacationer's itinerary.

Pindaya is part of the picturesque district known as the Danu Self-Administered Zone (SAZ). Cradled on one side by a towering limestone mountain range, the town is otherwise surrounded by rich farmland resembling a glorious patchwork quilt. The heart of the village wraps around the centrally located Pone Taloke Lake. Water lifeline for much of the town, its shores are busy with locals tending to daily chores.

Beyond the northern shore of the lake is the bustling weekly market. It's easy to lose an hour or two here, absorbing the atmosphere. All kinds of products, including locally grown tea and coffee are sold by the people from various ethnic groups living in the district.

Strolling further along, around the bend is the Plan Bee - Beekeeping Centre. An internationally supported



project to assist in the modernization of beekeeping in Myanmar. The program focuses on improving the lives of people by building the capacity of local honey production. Visitors are graciously welcomed to the educational centre and shop. Kids enjoy honey-tasting session while adults appreciate the coffee made from locally produced beans that's served on the gorgeous lakeside deck.



Plan Bee – Beekeeping Centre

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TOURISM

Close to Pindaya's star attraction Shwe Oo Min Natural Cave, is the Shan umbrella-making workshop. Every day an exuberant crew of artisans keen to show off their skills demonstrate the art of Shan paper making and umbrella construction.

Set above the town with chambers weaving deeply into the mountainside is the Shwe Oo Min Natural Cave. Most take the elevator to the entrance. Otherwise there's a stairway with a subtle elevation gain skirting the mountainside offering fantastic views of the district – not to be confused with the other heart-straining stairway pointing directly skyward. There's a 3,000 Myanmar Kyat (\$2 USD) entrance fee, and every year around Full Moon of Tabaung in March, there's a spectacular five-day religious festival.

For the adventurous and active visitors, trekking is a fantastic alternative to the usual and popular Kalaw/Inle Lake routes. Danu Trails, a project focused on promoting tourism and local employment in the Danu SAZ have developed half, full, and multi day trekking routes which are identified by experience and graded by difficulty level. Highlights include



Making Umbrellas



Children making paper



visits to local villages and farming communities of the Danu, Pa-O and Palaung. For the most fulfilling and community minded experience, trek with a local licensed guide is a must.

Looking for a comfortable hotel to kick back at the end of the day? Pindaya Farmhouse is a lovely family run property. The boutique two-storey residence has five attractive rooms. The attached bathrooms have walk-in showers and each balcony/terrace is furnished. Upstairs there is a common sitting/dining room with corner floor-to-ceiling windows and panoramic views of the countryside — A perfect spot for reading a book by the log fire on a rainy day or enjoying a pre-dinner gin and tonic and the sunset with friends as the

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TOURISM

aroma of dinner, soon to be served, wafts into the room. The outside-town location won't bother most people with the availability of bicycles on rent for guests. Otherwise, try the Pindaya Inle Inn. It's an attractive 36-room hotel built with accents in stone, wood and bamboo, centrally located near the lake. Their onsite restaurant is well-known for local Danu dishes.

So, if you're looking for a pleasant weekend escape from Yangon, the less-travelled destination of Pindaya is certainly worth your Myanmar holiday itinerary.



Pindaya Inle Inn

CONTENT AND PHOTO COURTESY



Email Id – hello@myanmar1sthand.com



Pindaya Farmhouse

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ART AND CULTURE



THINGYAN - MYANMAR'S WATER FESTIVAL

THINGYAN – MYANMAR’S WATER FESTIVAL

Content Courtesy - Kanika Marwaha

Soaked in water, steeped in tradition', that's how one would describe the New Year celebrations of Myanmar. Thingyan (popularly known as the water festival) or the Burmese New Year is a five days national holiday in the month of April and the whole of Myanmar comes to celebrate it. It is very similar to the Thai 'Songkran', the Laos' New Year, the Cambodian 'Chaul Chnam Thmey', and the 'Puthandu' of Malaysia and Singapore.

Coinciding with the end of hot and dry season and start of spring, awash with the meaning of renewal and re-birth, this festival is truly special in more ways than one. It is the time of the year when everyone - irrespective of the social rank and religious affiliations - comes together to celebrate the birth of a new year, a new opportunity. This sentiment of brotherhood is made more beautiful by the abundance of the bright yellow Padauk flowers, in full blossom during this time of the year in Myanmar. It is the time of the year to be thankful for the gifts of the past year. Offerings of a green coconut with its stalk intact encircled by bunches of green bananas are made to the images of Buddha and to the monks who observe Eight Precepts, in place of the standard Five Precepts.

It is a time to renew and strengthen the bonds of love, people visit their elders to pay respect; visitors are welcomed by smearing paste made from leaves and flowers on the forehead, especially with the one made from the Pink Apple leaves, which is said to bring



Padauk Flowers

good fortune and peace; food donations are made at various places; and, as a symbolic act of seeking release from the miseries of this life, fishes are released into large lakes and rivers.

The origin of the festival can be traced back to the Buddhist version of a Hindu myth. According to the tradition, it is said that the King of Barhmas: Arsi, lost a wager to the King of Devas: Śakra, who decapitated Arsi. The head of an elephant was put onto the Brahma's body who then became Ganesha. However, Brahma was so powerful that if the head were thrown to the sea, it would dry up immediately; if it were thrown on land it would be scorched. If it were thrown up into the air the sky would burst into flames. Śakra therefore ordained that the Brahma's head be carried by one princess Devi after another taking turns for a year each. The New Year henceforth came to signify the

*It is the time of
the year to be
thankful for the
gifts of the past
year.*

ART & CULTURE

changing of hands of the Brahma's head.

Interestingly, Thingyan itself has changed and evolved in character - from being about the traditional sprinkling of water to absolve oneself of the sins of the past year and to renew the spirits into a five- day long period of merrymaking, a celebration of life and all its shades. Brightly coloured, Huge platforms or pandals (usually sponsored by brands), with rows of brightly coloured hose pipes dangling downwards dot different corners of the city and almost every locality has its own. Water guns, buckets and water hoses are the other iconic weapons of mass soaking. Accompanying the endless spray of joy are the cultural shows, with traditional dancing and singing, a spectacle that is food for the soul. Moreover, plethora of options are available to choose from to feed the hungry souls - tired after a day's hard work of fun and frolicking. The three most popular and iconic Thingyan foods are Mont Lat Saung, Shwe Yin Aye and Mont Lone Yay Paw.

'Mont Lone Yay Paw' is a preparation of sticky rice balls with filled centers topped with fresh grated coconut. Its bretheren, 'Mont Lat Saung' is a type of jelly served with cold jaggery juice or coconut milk and 'Shwe Yin Aye' is similar like Mont Lat Saung but richer because of the addition of ingredients of bread, sticky rice, and different colours of assorted jellies eating with cold coconut milk. In Mon state, a special dish made of dried snakehead fish, onions, beeswax, and green mangoes is served.

All in all, Thingyan fervour is vibrant and vivacious beckoning one and all to be part of this grand celebration as they welcome the New Year.

About the author

Kanika Marwaha is a Spanish expert and an ardent traveller interested in writing about world cuisine, art and culture.



Shwe Yin Aye



Mont Lone Yay Paw





EASTERN HIMALAYAN NATURENOMICS™ FORUM

1st & 2nd November, 2018
Guwahati, Assam, India

*Rural Futures : Towards
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EASTERN HIMALAYAS

NORTHEAST



ENVIRONMENT

- COMMUNITY FORESTRY EFFORT REWARDED BY NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY ORGANISATION

INFRASTRUCTURE

- ARUNACHAL PRADESH ON INDIA'S AVIATION MAP

INVESTMENT

- TEXMACO CONNECTS INDIA AND BANGLADESH VIA NORTHEASTERN RAILWAY LINE

SPORTS

- SIKKIM PREPARES TO HOST THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN BIKING RACE

COMMUNITY FORESTRY EFFORT REWARDED BY NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY ORGANISATION

Native community of the Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh – Bugun tribe's community forestry efforts in conserving the rare wild species of the region have been acknowledged and rewarded by an independent biodiversity organisation: National Biodiversity Organisation (NBA). Jointly in association with the forest department, the Bugun tribe designated a 17 square km biodiversity hotspot as the Singchung Bugun Community Reserve (SBVCR).

The designated community reserve is a non-governmental organisation, situated alongside the biodiversity area of the Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary, inhabited by diverse species of birds and animals in large numbers. Thus, its conservation and protection by the Bugun community has also managed to guard a particular bird species whose existence is found only here. To commemorate their efforts, the bird is known by the name of Bugun tribe - Bugun Liocichla.

Along with the facilitation by the NBA and the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Singchung Bugun Community Reserve received a memento, citation and a monetary compensation of Rs. One Lakh. Indi Glow and Sange Norbu Phiang represented the organisation at the time of facilitation in Hyderabad.

Thereby, recognition of a community fostered conservation project by the authority of National Biodiversity Organisation, has set an inspiring example for many



working in the process of conservation of natural landscapes. As remarked by the DFO, "I believe this prestigious award to the society would encourage them to work harder for conserving the environment." He further added, "Till today this award has not been given to any society in the state and so this is a great achievement both for the Bugun community as well as the state."

Jointly in association with the forest department, the Bugun tribe designated a 17 square km biodiversity hotspot as the Singchung Bugun Community Reserve (SBVCR).

ARUNACHAL PRADESH ON INDIA'S AVIATION MAP



Alliance Air

Sourced from Google

An unprecedented development in the state of Arunachal Pradesh has led to happiness among the people of the region as the state places itself on the aviation map of India. Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi's efforts in connecting the state with mainland India via road and air have permeated his development plans consistently. It reached its manifestation through Arunachal Pradesh getting its first fixed-wing aircraft operating between the regions of Kolkata and Guwahati with touch down base at Arunachal Pradesh's Pasighat.

On this joyous occasion, the Chief Minister of the state Mr. Pema Khandu expressed, "Today is a historic day and I congratulate the people of Arunachal in general and people of Pasighat in particular for this new milestone that would remain engraved in history as a huge step in the development of our state."

Becoming part of the commercial aviation industry, the first fixed-wing flight is a subsidiary of Air India called Alliance Air whose flying duration would be three times in a week; Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. With this

development in place, more regions are being considered to get connected via aviation route.

The next in line would be the region of Tezu as clearly mentioned by the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh. He expressed this news as part of his Air Connectivity Scheme wherein he plans to hire a small eight to ten-seater fixed-wing aircraft in order to connect with regions like Mechuka as well.

TEXMACO CONNECTS INDIA AND BANGLADESH VIA NORTHEASTERN RAILWAY LINE



A 200-crore worth deal to construct a railway line connecting Agartala in India to Akhaura in Bangladesh has been aced by India's railway solution provider Texmaco Rail and Engineering. An infrastructural development connecting the two neighbouring countries is geared to boost the bilateral relations, impacting the economies of both the countries. Once the construction gets implemented, travellers from Agartala to Kolkata and vice versa would experience a shorter distance to commute; approximately by a 1000 km. The 45 km gauge line connecting these two places would also expediate India's reach to the Chittagong port, Bangladesh.

Executive Director of Texmaco Rail Mr. Sandeep Fuller expressed, "It is a matter of pride that with this project Adventz will contribute to the Trans Asia

Railway Network and aid in boosting bilateral trade and cooperation between the two countries. The rail link – as Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi envisions – will affect transformation through transportation."

An estimate of 18 months has been stipulated to reach the completion of this project. With this executed, progress in trade prospects, and enhancement in people to people connect is being eagerly looked forward to. Through this connectivity, the East and the West of Bangladesh would be integrated cohesively.



A 200-crore worth deal to construct a railway line connecting Agartala in India to Akhaura in Bangladesh has been aced by India's railway solution provider Texmaco Rail and Engineering.

SIKKIM PREPARES TO HOST THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN BIKING RACE

The state of Sikkim is all pumped up for an exhilarating biking event to be held in the month of June. In its second year, the scale of the racing event has been pushed globally with bikers from Nepal and Bhutan marking their participation. This is being projected as the highest Mountain Biking race worldwide – a cross country endurance race funded by Rajya Sabha MP Mr. Hissey Lachungpa and the district administration.



The route spans from Mangan, Lachung, Yumesamdong to Gurudongmar. Traversing the treacherous terrains and soaking in the absolute serenity at 17,800 feet above sea level – EPIC Mountain Biking Race is a biker's paradise as well as a challenge.

Organised by Sikkim's North District Administration in association with Mountain Goats Adventure Company and Hub Outdoors, the biking event intends to promote sustainable tourism and a sense of entrepreneurial empowerment among the youth taking the ride. Designed in the format of a four-stage race, EPIC 17000 race event has been noted in the World's biking calendar.

Underscored by the pertinent theme of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' and 'Secure Himalayas', the race echoes the state government's interest concerning education, empowerment, tourism and sustainability.

'Secure Himalayas' reverberates the sentiment to actively keep saving the environment from degradation caused by natural and anthropogenic factors while restoring the bounty and biodiversity of the Himalayas. The race is an indulgence for all the nature lovers gearing to take part in the race. The winner is entitled to prize money worth Rs. 2,50,000.

The event is well backed by supportive staff looking after the logistics and the medical emergency requirements.



Gurudongmar Lake

INNOVATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY IN EASTERN HIMALAYAS

Content Courtesy - Saurav Malhotra

At a recent convocation of IIIT Guwahati, Ranjit Barthakur, Founder Trustee of Balipara Foundation, pioneer of Rural Futures in the Eastern Himalayas, emphasized on the key role that Institutes like IIIT can play in innovating with nature to strike a balance between fast paced technological advancement and its application to preserve natural assets in the Eastern Himalayas and enhance socio-economic development in the region.

In this modern age, the pertinence of an institution such as the IIIT is realized easily if one brushes through the morning newspaper. It is normal to encounter conversations on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning and people talking about their versatile robotic pets, which also have the ability to vacuum the floors when you are at work.

We have used technology and carried out multi-sectoral innovation projects to develop tools to make our lives easier. We could speculate that the course of natural selection will lead to humans with magnified brains and diminished mobility - because we'll have robots carrying us around. Now this could go two ways - the way of ignoring nature and innovating to satisfy our consumerism or innovating with nature and maximizing the enhancement and preservation of our natural assets through technology and all that the modern age has to offer.

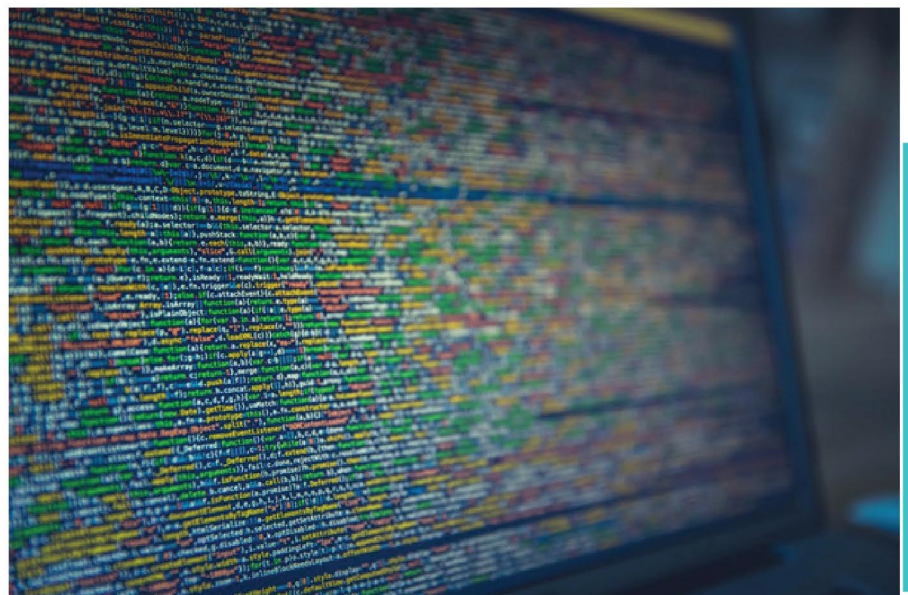
With special focus on technology I would like to address and quote a few paragraphs from Bill Gates at a recent technology conference.



Changes in Technology:

Hardware and Software Advances: Now, this work is more ambitious every year. Developers can write applications that were not possible before. What's the reason for this? Well, there's really two key things, one is the advance in hardware, and the second is the advance in the software platform. And we can't underestimate the important role that hardware improvement plays here. After all, we can add exponential improvement in the

performance of the microprocessor itself. The increasing clock speed has allowed it to do applications that simply wouldn't have been possible in the past. The unbelievable amounts of storage we have today, meaning that databases that record every click for millions of customers, and get data mined for deep patterns, those are now feasible on fairly low-cost systems. And so, the sky is the limit in terms of empowering people and writing very rich applications.



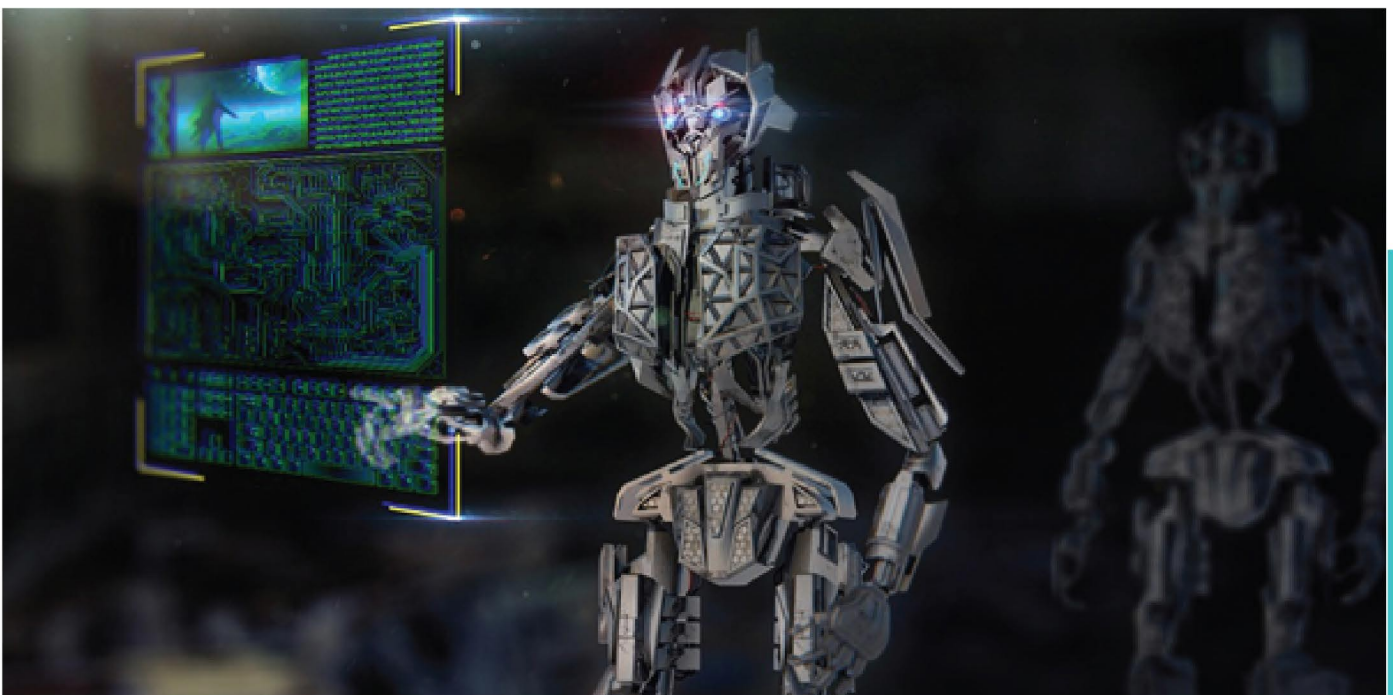
The microprocessor has gone through a lot of changes. We went from the 16-bit processor with a meg of memory to the 286 that gave us a 24-bit memory space, then to the 386 with a 32-bit memory space, and now we're in the transition to 64-bit. And that's quite soon because that compatibility, the ability to run the existing applications is fairly straightforward. At the driver level we need a few changes, but this will be probably the simplest address space transition we've made.



Looming after that, though, is an even more interesting challenge — the clock speed will not increase at the same rate it has over the last 30 years. It will largely stay the same, and the additional performance will come from having multiple execution units. And so, the need to take programs and break them down into parallel execution units now becomes absolutely necessary to get the benefit of the exponential increase in transistors.

Beyond the microprocessor, we have the ubiquity of broadband, both through wireless and wired connections, so that even sending high definition video becomes very reasonable. We have the cloud services. Historically, when we thought of the subroutine call, it was always on the same machine. But now with the pervasiveness of the Internet, and standards like the WS* standards and runtimes, we also like Windows Communications Framework, the ability to call out the logic on another system that might be anywhere on the Internet is just like the subroutine call of old. And so leveraging services, leveraging code that other people have done becomes very straightforward.

Now one of the big changes coming that I think is most underestimated is the change in interaction. Throughout all these improvements, the way we interact with the computer has hardly changed. We had the graphics revolution that took us from the keyboard to the keyboard and the mouse, and it took the screen from character mode to graphics mode. But still it's that one person sitting there, primarily using the keyboard, and the pointing device to interact with the application.



Bridging the Gap:

How do we now take advantage of the Mobile revolution which has penetrated in an all-pervasive way and democratized information and supported the digital revolution. These are big opportunities at the IIIT Guwahati as an institute endowed with tremendous locational advantage of being in the hub of the Eastern Himalayas. We have been blessed with an immense heritage - our natural assets. Our Natural Assets clubbed with an immeasurable bio-cultural diversity gives us a unique opportunity to innovate in ways others cannot. We need to collaborate with the leading IT institutions such as Oxford, Cambridge, Cornell, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Stanford University, University of Tokyo, The Technical University in Munich and others such to establish ways that are symbiotic to bridge the gap between technology, mobility and natural assets. The crying need of science and technology is to ensure that we can use Technology to address the real need of the people.

In the Eastern Himalayas, 100% of the population is rural because we don't have any large urban centres. Even cities like Guwahati are little more than an aggregate of slums. This is not actually urban. When such a large mass of the population isn't actually urban, shouldn't we see this as an opportunity to redefine sustainable development? Instead of haphazardly building infrastructure, what if we built based on the best available health, education, connectivity, water, etc. for rural areas? It is to this end that we (through our sister concern - the Balipara Foundation) have launched a pilot for socio-economic development and innovation — Rural Futures. We don't know the answers yet, but we have an idea of what this framework might look like to begin with. This could be a very interesting gap of application sciences and natural assets which we may want to bridge through these institutions. I am particularly pleased to see that the IIIT Guwahati has added a



subject in Environmental Sciences which is extremely relevant in this development programme.

Increasingly, science fiction is becoming science fact. Exponential technologies are rapidly changing our lives and societies, every day, everywhere. We will need different skills, and we will need to get much better at driving change — or we will be driven by it. Most importantly, we should embrace technology but not become it. Anything that can be digitized or automated will be - and anything that cannot be digitized or automated will become extremely valuable. Lastly, we must go beyond technology to define real human values in this new digital ecosystem.

Technology is all around us and now is the time when technology has to be used to its fullest to further innovate towards the security of our natural resources - Land, Energy, Waste, Water, Air and Carbon.

We have come a long way here at the IIIT and we should look forward to a continuous process of evolution through innovation and towards becoming the hub for social change for the betterment of the quality of the Human Life through Innovation and Technology in the Eastern Himalayas.

About the author

Saurav Malhotra is working with communities in Assam to rebuild degraded Asian Elephant habitats through the creation of alternative livelihoods and building assets for local communities. He is also interested in using technology to create awareness about all things science and human rights.

WHARTON SOCIAL IMPACT CONSULTANTS AT BALIPARA FOUNDATION'S SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Content Courtesy - Varsha Wadhvani, Communications, Balipara Foundation



with Kartik Das, Public Policy, Multinational Management to identify solutions for maximizing overall customer experience, point of contact interactions and efficient operations for enhanced home-stay experience. Jonathan Laguerre, Strategic Management and Kshitij Agarwal, Finance and Strategy, will focus on partnerships for fund-raising and create a robust finance model that will drive scale, impact and sustainability. Julie Berkowitz, Strategic Management and Kathleen Liu, Marketing and Operations will analyse best practices in design and innovation in communication for the desired impetus in reach, engagement, awareness and brand loyalty.

"We seek to benefit from their in-depth analytics, sharp strategic insight, and the innovative application of digital technologies to magnify the impact of our social impact", says Prabir Banerjee, Managing Member, Balipara Foundation. Social Impact Consulting is gaining momentum as the new lens for Corporate Strategy that helps create social change and sustainable business, with more and more millennials being inclined towards jobs that make a positive impact. "We want to create strategic plans that includes local communities and prioritizes greater good. Wild Mahseer is an ideal Social Enterprise Enhancement project for us to make tangible impacts." says Julie Berkowitz, Strategic Management, Wharton Social Impact Consulting.

Top Business School students came to Balipara Foundation's Social Enterprise - Eastern Himalayan Botanic Ark in residence at Wild Mahseer as part of the Wharton Global Impact Consulting Programme. Six Students from the MBA course, class of 2019 will serve as strategic advisors to enhance social impact by articulating the strategy and execution model of Wild Mahseer.

Designed to integrate rural livelihood through preservation and conservation of our natural resources at the Ark, we aim to empower local communities through socio-economic development and foster the interdependent relationship between nature and its nurturers. These Future Green Leaders will analyse our historical data, review financial and marketing models and help us refine our growth strategy by addressing the complex societal and environmental challenges that we work around.

Their itinerary includes stay at Wild Mahseer, one on one interactions

with stakeholders to understand the day to day operations, experience the local culture, nature and heritage that are promoted through experiential marketing and visit to the community villages for the homestay experience for meaningful conversations with the locals to add value to their learnings. They will also explore tea plantations and the tea culture of Assam and visit world heritage parks to soak in the biodiversity abundance.

The Wharton Social Impact Consulting programme is a non-profit student organized group that provides consulting services to address some of the most pressing issues of our times and achieve positive impact in the community. Students who have joined have a strong foundation in strategic roles and have studied in world class Universities such as Princeton, Stony Brook University, Lady Shri Ram College, IIT Delhi, etc.

Aditi Tusnial, who focuses on Marketing and Strategic Management at Wharton will work

BANGLADESH



BANGLADESH LAUNCHES ITS OWN SATELLITE BANGABANDHU-1

Vol 22: June 2018

MYANMAR MATTERS

BANGLADESH LAUNCHES ITS OWN SATELLITE: BANGABANDHU-1

Bangladesh has managed to secure its position in the international space spectrum with the launch of its own satellite called Bangabandhu-1. With this achievement, Bangladesh becomes the fourth in the whole of Southeast Asia to have its own satellite. Bangabandhu-1 derives its name from one of Bangladesh's prominent founding fathers popularly remembered as 'Bangabandhu' which translates to 'friend of Bengal'. For long Bangladesh has been attracting global attention for not so positive reasons, however, with the success of this scientific advancement, the economy of the country is sure to experience a high. Prime Minister of Bangladesh Ms. Sheikh Hasina expressed, "With the launch of the Bangabandhu-1 satellite, we are hoisting our national flag in space."

Becoming the 57th nation globally to clock this milestone, amid the rapturous environment, the move is being condemned by few for the mammoth monetary expense (over \$300 million) spent and the exact commercial purpose it intends to fulfil. Not being acknowledged with observation capabilities, Bangabandhu-1's purpose as stated by Bangladesh's communication and cybersecurity expert Mr. Javed Iqbal is intended for broadcasting, data communications and telecommunications as of now.

Its lifespan has been estimated to exceed 15 years with its accessibility being reached to other countries of South and Central Asian region as well. Loaded with 40 Ku-band and C-band transponders it seeks to reach out its communication services to television channels.



Bangladesh's State Minister for Information and Communication Mr. Zunaid Ahmed Palak stated, "The government is planning to allocate half of the 40 transponders to local TV stations, and the rest will be deployed to service the channels from other countries."

American firm SpaceX's rocket called Falcon 9 launched the satellite Bangabandhu-1 to the orbit from Florida's Kennedy Space Centre. The spectacle was attentively observed by the Bangladesh delegation with utmost pride and glory.

The transpiring of this event has kindled interest in the youth and more specifically in the children of the country to know more about science and space related technology. Iqbal added, "Kids are asking questions about rockets and trying to understand the physics of space flight. It's intangible, we will not be able to measure this in takas or dollars until this generation grows up. I predict this will result in a renewed interest in science in Bangladesh and the net benefit of that will be greater than the cost of the satellite."

BHUTAN



Panbang

A TINY HAMLET IN BHUTAN - PANBANG

A TINY HAMLET IN BHUTAN – PANBANG

Content Courtesy – Karishma Ahmed, Naturenomics™ Executive, Balipara Foundation

Nestled in an idyllic surrounding, in the sub-tropical belt of Bhutan - Panbang is almost adjacent to the Royal Manas National Park. Taking the route that snakes through two national Parks – the Manas National Park in India and Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan, Balipara Foundation team witnessed a tiny hamlet in Bhutan: Panbang. This tiny hamlet experiences a community livelihood amidst wildlife. Panbang ecolodges with magnificent landscapes. It's a lovely village located in the sub-tropical belt of Bhutan nestled between Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan and Manas Tiger Reserve in India. The place is blessed with two mighty rivers of Bhutan, Mangde Chu and Drangme Chu. During the earlier phase of the settlement, in the absence of permanent bridge, people traveling from Panbang crossed Drangme Chu river on a boat like structure made by bamboo - locally known as Pan. It is believed that Panbang got named this way.



An ecolodge in Panbang



The Galabi View Point



Serkim Labha - the highest point on the road towards Panbang

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The Creation of Sonamthang Village - An Initiative by late Dasho Keiji Nishioka

Sonamthang village used to be one of the forested areas in Bhutan. Later, with the arrival of late Dasho Keiji Nishioka to Panbang, the forest was cleared with bulldozers that were transported over the Drangmechhu in pans, or boats woven out of cane. This is how Sonamthang village came to exist.

Dasho Nishioka called the people living around the area to come and clear the forests to turn it into a wetland. He cleared the forests and turned it into paddy fields as there was no wetland in Ngangla gewog at that time. Sonamthang has some 146 acres of wetland today.

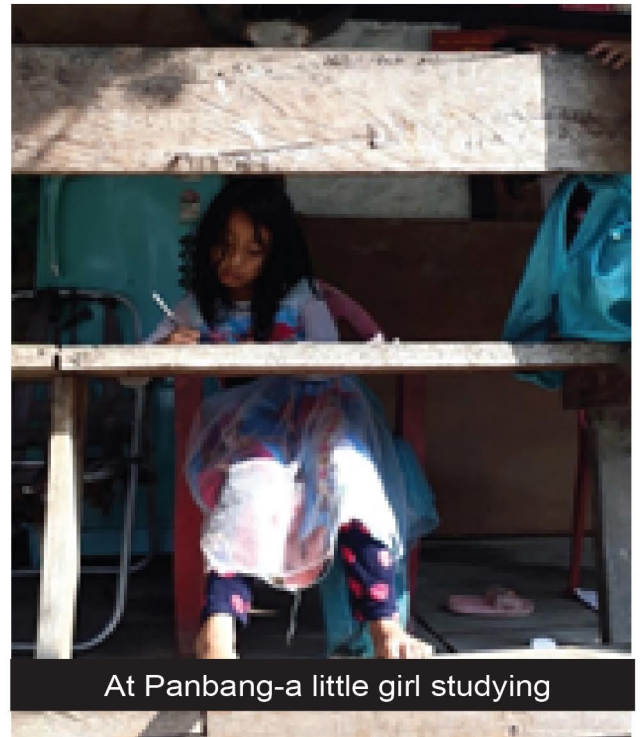
Dasho Keiji Nishioka- A Japanese who lived for Bhutan

Dasho Keiji Nishioka, a Japanese agriculture expert who came to Bhutan in 1964 helped the country modernize its agriculture. Many Bhutanese farmers benefited from his new farming methods and the improved variety of crops, fruits and vegetables. For his selfless service to Bhutan, the Fourth King His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck awarded him the Red Scarf with the title of Dasho in 1980. His selfless service was again recognized when he was posthumously awarded the Druk Thugsay Medal, the highest civilian award, which translates as “the Heart-son of Bhutan”, during the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Reign of the Fourth King.

A larger than life figure, Dasho Keiji Nishioka was to Bhutanese farmers what Father William Mackey was to Bhutanese students. While working with Bhutanese farmers for 28 long years until his death, he weathered the vagaries of Himalayan climate; tolerated the incivility of a nascent Bhutanese bureaucracy mostly headed by Indian expatriates; toiled and sweated with the farmers; dug the foundations of modern agriculture; sowed the first seeds of agriculture revolution; ignited the first dynamo of farming technology; watered dry fields with modern irrigation; created vibrant communities out of malaria-infested sub-tropical lands; and much more.

The Hanging Bridge at Panbang, Bhutan

The bridge was constructed during the fifth Five Year Plan but there was a desire to still name the bridge



At Panbang-a little girl studying



The Hanging Bridge at Panbang



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bridge Nishoka. The rationale behind the decision was that Panbang wanted to acknowledge Dasho Nishoka's hard work. The Royal Government of Bhutan decided to preserve the bridge not only in the memory of the late Nishoka but also as a tourist attraction.

A house stands a few metres from the bridge. It is also known as Nishioka house. The house was constructed during the Four Plan by Dasho Nishioka but he himself did not live there. One of his Bhutanese assistants lived there instead. The two-storey Bhutanese house is abandoned and is in a dilapidated condition. The floor planks have rotted, and the roof is falling apart. Bushes have crept up its wall. Near the house, a grove of Agar woods stands straight and tall. Dasho Nishoka planted these trees. Today they fall under the care of the forest department.

Adventure: Panbang to Royal Manas National Park Camp

A National Park situated along the River bank of the Manas. Lusty green forest and clear frozen Himalayan water gives one fascinating views during the tour. The rafting from Panbang to Royal Manas National Park is a perfect route for bird watching and to sight other fauna. The spectacular view of the mountains surrounding Panbang is simply captivating.



The Magnificent View while rafting from Panbang to Royal Manas National Park



The true servicemen- Boatman Rajkumar Choudhury who has been serving RMNP for 30 years (L) and Boatman Ramkumar Choudhury who has been serving RMNP for 12 years (R)

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About the author

Karishma Ahmed is a Naturenomics™ executive at Balipara Foundation. As part of the team, her efforts are centered on organizing forums and programmes, communication outreach strategy and to coordinate and manage communication and branding objectives of the foundation. Her other interests and expertise include socio-economic research with a special focus on gender empowerment and Ecofeminism.

Wild Mahseer

Where history is your host

Wild Mahseer is the flagship property of River Journeys & Bungalows of India. We have made efforts to re-create the life of the British Tea planter and focus on his love for nature. Wild Mahseer was born out of this sense of conquest of this renowned game fish known as the strongest fighter fish of the Indian rivers.

Vision & Mission: RJB is in the business of romanticizing nature and history. This will be actualized by creating unique and diverse experiences by integrating a differentiated living experience, the diversity of wildlife, the local natural environs, talent, cuisine and other cultural forms.

Eastern Himalayan Botanic Ark in Residence at Wild Mahseer:

Keeping nature and history alive, the Eastern Himalayan Botanic Ark in Residence at Wild Mahseer is a nature inspired heritage living within the biodiverse haven of exotic flowers, plants, birds and butterflies of the Eastern Himalayas that has been tended to and flourished through the passion and knowledge of the Communities that live around the Ark.



Products & Services:

Accommodation:

- 5 Bungalows
 - Heritage Bungalow
 - Golden Tips
 - Silver Tips
 - Second Flush
 - Ambrosia
- 14 rooms
- 2 Conference Rooms



Activities:

Eastern Himalayan Botanic Trail, Naturenomics™ School, Naturenomics™ Nursery, Elephant and Jeep Safari, River Rafting, Jungle Trek, Bird watching, Botanic Trail, Dolphin Watching, Tea Tasting, Tea Factory and Garden Tour, Cooking Class, Tezpur City Tour, Ethnic Village tour, Ethnic Meals, Ethnic Dance, Cycling. One could also experience local cultures in a few neighbouring villages and sample ethnic food. In addition, Wild Mahseer is situated centrally to the Kaziranga National Park, Nameri Tiger Reserve and Pakke Tiger Reserve.



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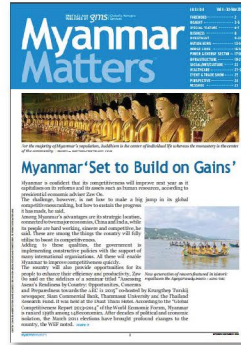
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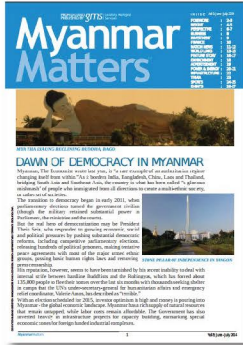
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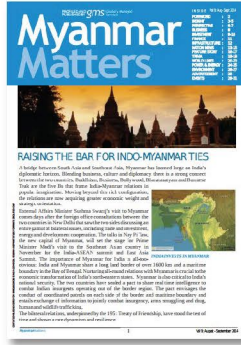
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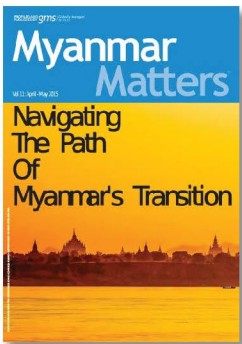
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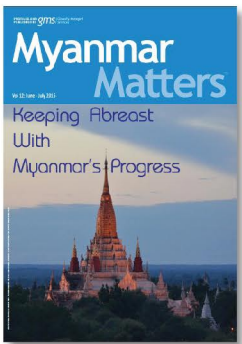
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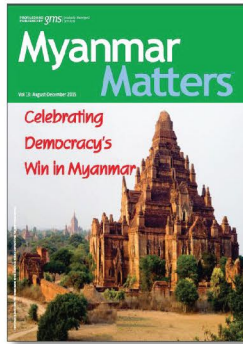
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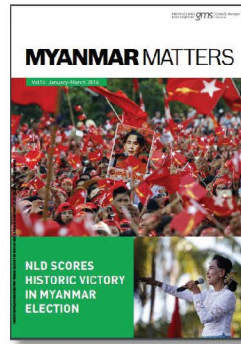
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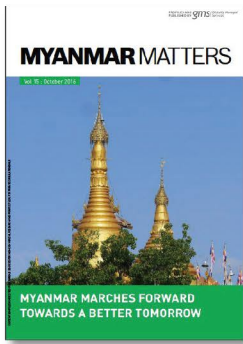
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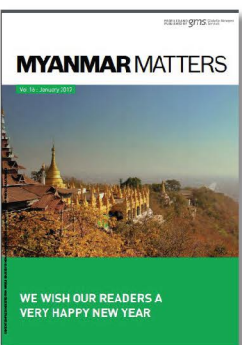
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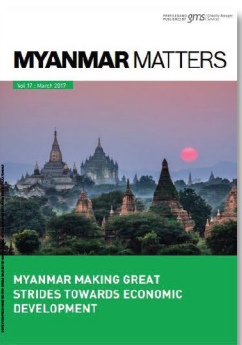
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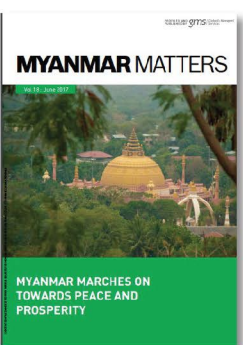
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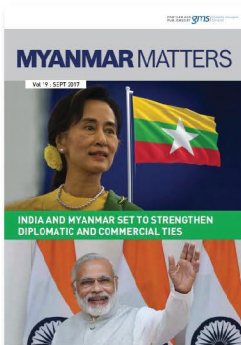
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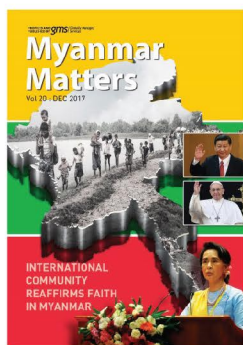
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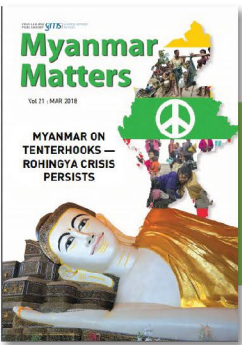
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vol 20. Dec 2017



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Vol 22: June 2018

MYANMAR MATTERS



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