

Asian Language & Culture Awareness

Burmese Language & Culture



*New York State Asian Languages Bilingual/ESL
Technical Assistance Center
(ALBETAC)*




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BURMESE GEOGRAPHY:

Myanmar (Burma), located in Southeast Asia, is the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia. The following are some facts on Myanmar.

FACTS ON MYANMAR (BURMA)	
Area	678,500sq. km.
Population	50,000,000
Capital	Yangon (Rangoon) <i>(In 2005, the administrative capital of Myanmar became Naypyidaw.)</i>
Administrative Divisions	7 States 7 Divisions
Chief of State	Gen. Than Swe, Head of Cabinet under State Peace and Development Council since 1992.
Government	Republic <i>(In 1988 a military coup took place and the military administration is still in effect.)</i>
Exchange Rate	6 Kyats = 1 U.S. Dollar
GDP* (per capita)	\$1,200 (2008 est.)
Flag	



To learn more about Myanmar (Burma), you may visit the following websites:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/asia/Myanmar> (or Burma)

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/asia/myanmar/htm>

<http://www.ASEAN.org>

<http://www.UNESCO.org>

EDUCATION:

EDUCATION AND LITERACY RATES IN MYANMAR			
Years of Compulsory Schooling	Literacy Rate (Age 15 and over can read and write)		
	Total %	Male	Female
10 years (elementary, middle school and 10 th grade matriculation)*	89.9%	95.6%	93.2%

Note to Teachers: The school year in Myanmar is different than in New York. In Myanmar it begins in June and ends in February. For High Schools it ends mid-March.

*In Myanmar Compulsory Schooling is K- 4th Grade. Students can continue from Middle to High School (10th Grade). 10th Grade is Matriculation. Students enter Universities and Colleges after Matriculation at age 16.

To learn more about Myanmar education, please see the following:

[http:// www.educationmyanmar.com](http://www.educationmyanmar.com)

<http://www.cetana.org> The Cetana Education Foundation, located in Princeton, USA, has an outstanding program of publishing dictionaries of the ethnic nationalities. Dictionaries of English- Karen, English- Kachin and English- Shan languages are available. There are also scholarship programs.

<http://www.sorosfoundation.burmaproject.org> The Soros Foundation also offers scholarship programs and grants for education.

MYANMAR LANGUAGE & WRITING:

Myanmar (Burmese) is the official language. It is one of 100 languages spoken in the country. Myanmar is derived from the Brahmi script which flourished in India from 500 BC to 300 AD.

The Brahmi script spread to Tibet, Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia in the period 100 AD -800 AD with the influence of Indian beliefs and culture. The script developed the indigenous scripts for those countries.

In Myanmar the ethnic nationalities' Shan, Karen, Mon, Rakhine scripts are also derived from the Brahmi scripts.

The Kachin, and Chin nationalities' scripts are Romanized alphabets.

Some features of Myanmar language are:

- The alphabet consists of 33 consonants, 12 vowels and diacritic marks.
- Words and letters are written from left to right.

Note to Teachers: Myanmar English language learners may have difficulty in pronouncing words as some sounds do not exist in the Myanmar language (e.g. *ch, th, wh*).

In Myanmar grammar construction there is no "ing" ending. There is also no future tense in Myanmar.

The following chart features the Burmese alphabet.

CHART OF THE BURMESE ALPHABETS				
မြန်မာ ဗျည်းအက္ခရာ (၃၃) လုံးတို့အား မြန်မာ အင်္ဂလိပ် အသံထွက်နှင့်တကွ ဖော်ပြသော ဇယား				
က ကကြီး Ka Gyi Ka	ခ ခခွေး Kha Gway Kha	ဂ ဂငယ် Ga Ngwe Ga	ဃ ဃကြီး Ga Gyi Ga	င င Nga Nga
စ စလုံး Sa Lone Sa	ဆ ဆလိမ် Hsa Lane Sa	ဇ ဇဝွဲ Za Gwe Za	ည ည Za Myinzwe Za	ဉ ဉ Nya Nya
ဇု ဇု သံလျှင်းချိုပ် Ta Than Hlin Chate Ta	ဌ ဌ ဝမ်းဘဲ Hta Wan Bae Hta	ဋ ဋ သံကောက် Da Than Gout Da	ဍ ဍ ရေမှုတ် Da Yay Hmout Da	ဏ ဏကြီး Na Gyi Na
တ တ Ta Wan Bu Ta	ထ ထ Hta Sin Du Hta	ဒ ဒ Da Dwe Da	ဓ ဓ Dout Chaik Da	န န Na Nge Na
ပ ပ ဇာက် Pa Zout Pa	ဖ ဖ ဦးထုတ် Pha Oo Htoke Pha	ဗ ဗ ထက်ချိုက် Ba Htet Chaik Ba	ဘ ဘ ဂုမ်း Ba Gone Ba	မ မ Ma Ma
ယ ယ ဟင်္ဂလက် Ya Pa Let Ya	ရ ရ ဂေါက် Ya Gout Ya	လ လ La La	ဝ ဝ Wa Wa	သ သ Tha Tha
	ဟ ဟ Ha Ha	ဌ ဌ La Gyi La	အ အ Ah Ah	

The following chart provides some useful phrases in Burmese that will help create a welcoming and supportive environment for your Burmese English language learners.

USEFUL PHRASES FOR THE CLASSROOM - MYANMAR (BURMESE)		
English	Pronunciation	Myanmar (Writing)
My name is ...	Kya note nar mae..... Kya Nawt nar mae.... Kya ma nar mae	ကျွန်ုပ် နာမည် --- ကျွန်တော် နာမည် --- ကျမ နာမည် ---
How are you?	Bae lo lel	ဘယ် လို လဲ
Fine. (Answer to "How are you?")	Dee lo bell	ဒီ လို ပဲ
Thank you.	Kyay zu tin bar dae	ကျေးဇူးတင်ပါတယ်
You are welcome (Answer to "Thank you.")	Ya bar dae	ရ ပါ တယ်
Welcome. (greeting)	Min ga lar bar, Kya bar	မင်္ဂလာပါ ကြွပါ
Good-bye.	Khayint pyu bar	ခွင့်ပြုပါ
Please sit down.	Htai bar ohn	ထိုင်ပါအုံး
Please stand up.	Mat tat yut pay bar	မတ်တပ်ရပ်ပေးပါ
Let's begin.	Sa gya bar soe	စ ကြ ပါစို့
Good.	Kyaung bar bee	ကောင်းပါပြီ
Very good.	Thake kyaung bar dae	သိပ်ကောင်းပါတယ်
Try again.	Htup loke kyí bar ohn	ထပ်လုပ်ကြည့်ပါအုံး
This is the homework.	De har ain zar bar	ဒီဟာ အိမ်စာပါ
Please open your book.	Min sarokeko phwint kyí ya-aung	မင်းစာအုပ်ကို ဖွင့်ကြည့်ရအောင်
Do you understand?	Min nar lae lar	မင်းနားလည်လား

For more information on the Burmese language, you may visit the following websites:
<http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Burmese/Script/language.htm> SEAsite: Center for Southeast Asian
 Studies /Northern Illinois University Home Page
www.seasite.niu.edu/burmese/ Burmese Language Lessons online from John Orkell

CULTURE:

- **Religion**

Gauddama Buddha a prince from Nepal became the Enlightened One. His teachings and practices spread overall to China and Southeast Asia. After his death Buddhism became divided into Theravada Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. Myanmar (Burma) practices Theravada Buddhism.

Some interesting facts about religion in Myanmar are:

- 90% are Buddhist in Myanmar, 4% are Christian (3% Baptist and 1% Catholic), 4% Muslim, and 2% Animist.
- Hand in hand with these religions in Myanmar, there exists the worship of NATS (all beings of the Spirit World).
- In Myanmar the 37 NATS are still culturally accepted and observed.

To learn more about Theravada Buddhism and religion in Myanmar, you may visit the following websites:

www.edhamma.com *eDhamma.com: A Window to Theravada Buddhism*

<http://www.thisismyanmar.com/nibbana/> *Presenting THERAVADA BUDDHISM in Its Pristine Form*

www.myanmar.com *Myanmar.com [This website has a detailed section about Buddhist practices in Myanmar. Click Myanmar States (at the left), then click on Buddhism (at the top).]*

In New York and New Jersey, the American Burma Buddhist Association, Inc. is well known for its Theravada Buddhist practices. The first Burmese Pagoda constructed in the United States is also located in New Jersey.

***LokaChantha Pagoda
Manalapan, New Jersey***



Please see <http://www.mahasiusa.org>, the site for the American Burma Buddhist Association. The picture gallery has an archive of the full construction of the LokaChantha pagoda in the United States.

The following books are recommended for Theravada Buddhism and its practices in Myanmar:

- Roscoe, Gerald- *An Introduction to Buddhism for the Westerner*. 2004, 96 pages.
- Ray, Niharranjan- *Theravada Buddhism in Burma*. 1946. Reprint 2002. 120 pages.
- Temple, Sir Richard- *37 Nats: A Phase of Spirit Worship Prevailing in Burma*. W. Griggs. London. 1906. (Reprint-Kriscale. London.1991)

Please note that you can view series of videos, *The 37 Nat of Myanmar*, on YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqP2Vkc98Lo

• Family

Respect for Elders dictates behavior among Myanmar family and authority. God, Religious Law, Missionary, Parents and Teachers [Phaya, Tayar, Sangha, MiBa, Saya thamar (in Myanmar)] are categorized in one level and due honor and respect must be observed.

Some interesting features of the Burmese family structure include the following:

- Only elders have the right to question a younger person's life history.
- Hospitality and generosity are freely observed. The Buddhist belief that merit gained in this life gains a better existence in the next life is ingrained.
- Women follow in the footsteps of men, *YAUNG NAUK SADONE PAR*, in the Myanmar language. Men's hairstyle in olden days was a "Topknot", and women wore a "bun with a fringe".
- Myanmar women do have a lot of freedom. They stand side by side with men and run businesses. Market trading and small businesses are all in the hands of Burmese women.

To learn more about the Burmese family structure, please see the following:

www.mrtv-3 -Myanmar Weddings – Tying the Knot
-Bahusacana (To have knowledge – 38 Modes of Auspicious Conduct)

www.aungzay.org

AungZay Institute has published *Thirty Eight Mingalas* Series 1. The Mango and the Gwedauk Tree. by Min Yu Wai, translated by Sheila Desmond. 2009.

This 1st of the series is available at the Rubin Museum of Art, New York, NY.

<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/myanmar>

Books on the Burmese family -

- Chit, Khin Myo. *Colorful Myanmar*. 3rd Ed. Yangon, 1995.
- Khaing, Mi Mi. *Burmese Family*. Longmans Green. Bombay, 1946.

• Customs and Manners

Myanmar customs and manners, especially towards elders, are formal and traditional. In daily social relations strict social norms are observed.

- During the religious fasting period (July–October) abstinence from indulgences (e.g. drinking alcohol, eating meat, celebrating of marriages) is strictly observed. Members of the religious orders (Sangha-Buddhist clergy) are also restricted from traveling from one place to another during this fasting period.
- It is disrespectful to touch anyone on their head /hair. Even mothers must respect this observance with all men and even boys (sons).
- It is rude to step over any part of a person.
- First name usage is frowned upon. People must be addressed with the proper salutation, for example, "U" (Mr., Uncle), "Daw" (Ms., Mrs., Aunt), Maung (for Boys), Ma (for Girls).
- One does not sit at the same level with monks (members of the Buddhist Clergy) and elders.

For more information on Myanmar customs and manners you may visit the following websites:

www.yangoncity.com.mm and www.myanmar-tourism.com

- **Cultural Dos & Don'ts**

❖ **Do:**

- Serve elders and oldest first or a place morsel of food (especially rice and curry) as a token for the elders.
- Remove shoes and footwear when visiting pagodas, monasteries, and also when visiting homes.
- Tuck away feet. Do not point feet towards pagodas, religious images or a monk. Elders and Myanmar men are also given the same courtesy.
- Treat Buddha images with respect (no hugging and sitting on top of images for photos)

❖ **Don't:**

- Shorts are not worn when visiting pagodas and monasteries. Women do not wear strapless clothing. Hats, umbrellas and footwear are taken off before entering the vicinity of a religious place.
- Do not give one's back in the presence of Buddhist monks, teachers, parents and the aged.
- Buddhist monks, nuns and the elderly are not greeted with hand shakes or gestures. Handshakes are not necessary.
- A woman should not rearrange her garments, nor beautify herself in front of monks and the aged.
- Do not hug or kiss in public. Married people also do not show any signs of affection in public.
- Shouting, laughing and cat calls are frowned on in public.
- Women do not touch a monk.

To learn more about Myanmar culture, please visit the following websites:

<http://www.myanmarimes.com> is a weekly newspaper published in Myanmar and English. It has write ups on Burmese cultural observances

<http://www.mandalaygazette.com> is also a Myanmar community newspaper published in California. This newspaper has a cultural corner.

<http://www.MRTV-3.com>

<http://www.myanmartravelinformation.com>

www.myanmars.net has free travel information book 2009CD. DOs & DON'Ts are included.

- **Myanmar Calendar**

Myanmar has three calendars. The Myanmar calendar is a luni-solar based (motion of the sun and moon) calendar. The Myanmar calendar begins with the Thingyan Water Festival (Burmese New Year Festival) and takes place in April, according to the Georgian calendar. The Myanmar year is 1371.

The Theravada Buddhist year begins with the passing of Buddha into Nibbana. The current Buddhist year is 2553.

The Georgian Calendar is the calendar by which the Myanmar holidays of political significance are observed.

- **Myanmar Holidays**

➤ Myanmar is said to be the country with the most holidays. In the twelve month year, there is a holiday every month. Myanmar holidays are political, religious and cultural. In addition, each ethnic New Year, (e.g., Karen New Year) or cultural event is also observed in their respective States. Kachin Harvest Day (Manaw Festival) and the Shan Balloons & Kite Festival are some of the festivals observed together with the respective area Pagoda festivals.

In addition, other ethnic nationalities' religious and cultural holidays are also observed in Myanmar, for example: Christmas Day (Christians), Id (end of the Islam fasting period), the Dewali Festival (Hindu), and Chinese Lunar New Year.

HOLIDAYS IN MYANMAR			
	Holiday	Date	Significance
P O L I T I C A L	Independence Day	January 4	Celebrates independence from British colonial rule
	Union Day	February 12	Commemorate the signing of an agreement by all nationalities to complete the struggle for independence from the British
	Peasant's Day	March 2	Honors the country's largest work force
	Armed Forces Day	March 27	Commemorates the formation of the Burma Defense Army and their resistance against the Japanese during WWII. Known also as "Resistance Day".
	May Day	May 1	Honors workers; Labor Day
	Martyr's Day	July 19	Assassination of General Aung San (Father of the Independence Movement) and his Cabinet ministers.
R E L I G I O U S and C U L T U R A L	Full Moon of Kason	Full moon day in May. *	Celebrates three events of Buddha's life: Birth of Prince Siddatha, Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree as Buddha, and passing away of Buddha into Nibbana.
	Full Moon of Waso	Full moon day in July.*	Beginning of the Buddhist Lent period which lasts for three months.
	Full Moon of Thadingyut	Full moon day in October.*	End of the Buddhist Lent period. Lighting festival to commemorate Buddha's return to earth after preaching the scriptures to his mother in the celestial abode.
	Full Moon of Tazaungdaing	Full Moon day in November.*	Offering of "Kat hein". Offering of saffron robes to Buddha image and the Buddhist clergy.
	Maha Thingyan Festival (Burmese New Year)	Usually starts on April 12 th and usually ends on April 17 th , New Year's Day.*	First 3-4 days are spent on throwing water. On New Year's day, spiritual ceremonies are performed

*The date for these holidays depends on lunar movement and lunar calculations.

To learn more about Myanmar holidays, please see the following:

[http:// www.myanmar.com](http://www.myanmar.com)

<http://www.yangoncity.com.mm>

<http://www.thingyan.org/tghome.htm>



[2010 Summer Burmese Water Festival in Chinatown, New York City](#)



[2010 Burmese Water Festival in NYC \(Picture from http://www.thingyan.org/tghome.htm\)](http://www.thingyan.org/tghome.htm)

• Myanmar Surnames

- Myanmar do not have family names.
- Myanmar women also have their own name, given at birth, which they retain even after marriage.
- Myanmar has a Naming System. Please see the following charts.
- Myanmar can also change their names whenever they wish.

CHART 1

Northeast Sunday SUN Garuna	East Monday MOON Tiger	Southeast Tuesday MARS Lion	<u>Line 1: Cardinal Points</u> <u>Line 2: Days of the Week</u> <i>In Myanmar there are 8 days. Wednesday is divided into morning and afternoon.</i> <u>Line 3: Planets' Position</u> <i>Wednesday afternoon is the Myanmar astrological position.</i> <u>Line 4: Burmese Zodiac Sign</u> <i>Birth animal that corresponds to the person's day of birth.</i>
North Friday VENUS Guinea Pig		South Wednesday (morning) MERCURY Tusked Elephant	
Northeast Wednesday (afternoon) RAHU Tuskless Elephant	West Thursday JUPITER Mouse	Southeast Saturday SATURN Dragon	

CHART 2 - BURMESE ZODIAC SIGN

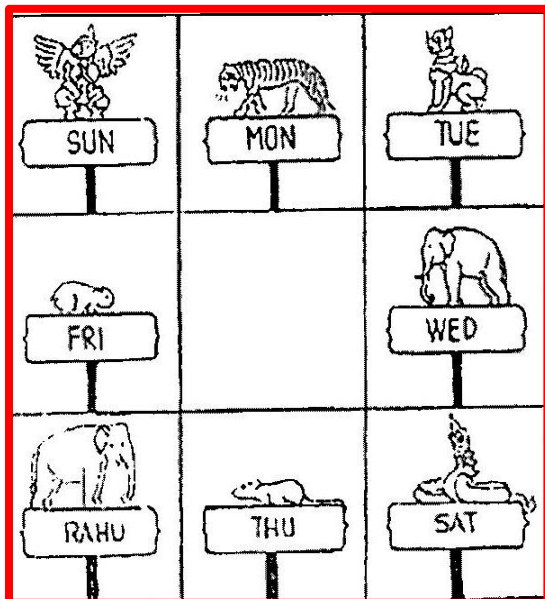


CHART 3 – NAMING SYSTEM

DAYS OF WEEK	BURMESE SCRIPTS	BIRTH #
Sunday	Ah, Oh, Au, U(Oo), Ok	1
Monday	Ka, Kha, Ga, Nga	2
Tuesday	Sa, Za, Nya	3
Wednesday (a.m.)	Wa, La	4
Wednesday (p.m.)	Ya, Ra	8
Thursday	Pa, Pha, Ba, Ma	5
Friday	Tha, Ha	6
Saturday	Ta, Hta, Da, Na	7

EXAMPLE OF NAMING USING THE CHARTS

A Sunday born child's name would begin as

(Mg) OHN MYINT Male boy

Or

(Ma) OHN MYINT Female girl

The Sunday born child would have the

-Birth Number: 1

-Burmese Zodiac Sign: GARUNA

-Cardinal Sign: Northeast

• A child's fate and name are set from the day of birth. Every Myanmar knows their sign, birth number and to which cardinal point they should pray when visiting a pagoda.

• Both male and female could have the same name. The titles, Mg and Ma, indicate the child's gender.

Shwe Yoe (Sir George Scott) in his book *The Burman His Life Thought and Notions* states, "For a Burman (Myanmar) a birthday occurs every week."

Please note that Charts 1 and 2 are from *Colorful Myanmar* (pages 18 and 14).

Chart 3 is from *Nar Metkaya Sun Namyi Ah Haw Kyan Gyi*.

For additional information please see the following websites and books:

<http://www.myanmar2day.com/myanmar-culture-custom/2008/>
www.burmalibrary.org/show.php (Free e- books are available.)

Shway Yoe (Sir George Scott). *The Burman His Life and Notions*, Norton Library, 1963.

Khin Myo Chit. *Colorful Myanmar*. 3rd Ed. Yangon, 1995.

Mi Mi Khaing. *Burmese Family*. Longmans Green. Bombay, 1946.

Mi Mi Khaing. *The World of Burmese Women*. Zed Books. London, 1984.

The following books, written in the Myanmar language, are useful in explaining the Burmese Naming System:

Zeya Theikdi U Soe Min. *Nar Metkaya Sun Namyi Ah Haw Kyan Gyi* (in Myanmar). 2nd Edition. Yangon, 1986.

U Tha Tint. *Poke Gala Pyinyat Ahchaygan Kyan Gyi*. 4th Edition. Yangon, 2002. (Please note that the translation of this book's title is *Personal Naming System and Basic Laws*.)

• Myanmar Cuisine

Rice with curries of meat, fish and seafood, soup and salad is the staple diet of Myanmar. Fish sauce (Ngan Pya Yay) and fish paste (Nga Pi, Nga PiYaygyo) are the inevitable condiment, spice and soul food for Myanmar. They are also known and used in other Southeast Asian countries.

Here are some interesting features of Myanmar cuisine:

- The ethnic nationalities also have a host of dishes prevalent to their regions. The cuisine of the Kachin, Kayin, Shan, Mon, Rakhine regions is known and enjoyed throughout the country.
- Chinese cooking from Yunnan, Hokkein and Hakka are also well known throughout Myanmar.
- Indian dishes such as Biryani, Pulau (rice with meat) is a favorite in the country.

MOHINGA (fish soup with rice noodles) is the national dish. Eaten as breakfast or as a meal any time of the day, it is known throughout the country in every State and region.

LAPHET (fermented tea leaves) is the Myanmar snack/salad/relish nationwide. It is part of Myanmar culture to offer "Betel, Tobacco & Laphet" as a sign of hospitality and welcome.

One can sample authentic Burmese food in New York at the following restaurants:

VILLAGE MINGALA
21 East 7th Street
New York, NY

CAFÉ MINGALA
1393 2nd Avenue (between 72nd and 71st Street)
New York, NY

Please visit the following websites for cuisine and recipes:

www.myanmar.com

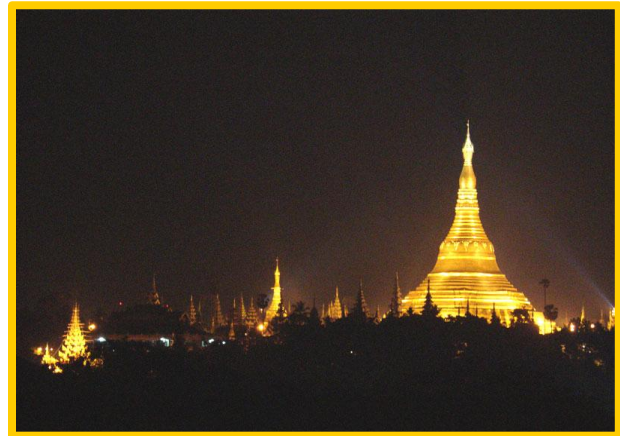
www.lulucooking.blogspot.com

www.greenelephant-restaurants.com

FACTS OF INTEREST:

• Did you know that ...

- 1 U Thant was the 1st Asian Secretary General of the United States.
- 2 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner, is also the famous opposition leader to the present administration of Myanmar. She is the daughter of the General Aung San, who was the leader of the Independence movement against British colonial rule.
- 3 Dr. Adoniram Judson and his wife Ann were the 1st American Christian missionaries in Myanmar. They arrived in 1813. Dr Judson developed Burmese grammar based on Latin grammar. He also wrote the 1st Myanmar-English Dictionary. Judson Church (Yu Da Than—in Burmese) was built in memory of Dr. Judson and is still in existence in Yangon today.
- 4 The Shwe Dagon Pagoda, the revered pagoda in Myanmar, is 2,597 years old. It is 326 feet in height. The sacred umbrella and spire, made of pure gold and precious gems, weighs 600 tons. The whole pagoda is gilded with pure gold and has a total weight of 3.5 tons
- 5 *Bridge on The River Kwai* is the Academy Award winning movie from David Lean, produced in 1957. The true WW II facts occurred in Myanmar (Burma) and Thailand. A train crossing was built in 1942 using POW labor, where over 60,000 men (British, American, Australian, Indian, Burmese, Malaysian and Indonesian laborers and POWs) were used in the construction of the train crossing over the MaeKlong River (renamed Kwai Yai River in 1960) from Thailand to Myanmar (Burma) at Than Byu Zayat. Today at Than Byu Zayat there is a War Memorial dedicated to those who lost their lives during the construction of this train crossing bridge.
- 6 Mount Hkakaborazi, located in the north of Myanmar, is the highest mountain of Southeast Asia. It is over 19,000 feet (5,889 meters) high.



- 7 Inle Leg Rowers from the Shan States are unique for rowing with one leg. They live in and around the floating villages of Inle Lake in the Shan states.



- 8 Pagan, the ancient city of the Burmese monarchs for over two and half centuries, was the capital of the Myanmar kings. Pagan is 16 square miles in area. Today, over 2,000 pagodas, temples and monasteries still exist. Pagan is a well known international tourist site.



- 9 Padaung means “Long Neck” in the Shan language. The Padaung are of Kayah ethnicity, one of the nationalities of Myanmar. Padaung women are noted for the bronze rings worn around their neck. Reasons and tradition are unknown, but anthropologists feel it is to protect against wild animals and against the slave trade.



- 10 The world famous Pigeon Blood Rubies are mined in Mogok, and Imperial Jade, known as “Yu” in China, is a product of the Jade Mines in Kachin State.
- 11 Karen (Kayin in Myanmar) is the second largest ethnic group of over 135 ethnic groups in Myanmar. Karens are known as Kariang in Thailand and populate the eastern border region of Myanmar, which is close to Western Thailand. There are also Karens living in the Ayeyawaddi delta of Burma.

For additional information on Facts of Interest, please visit the following websites:

#s 1, 2 and 3: <http://www.wikipedia.org/Myanmar>

#5: www.fepservices.com (There are photos and background information on the WWII death railway and war cemeteries.)

#6: www.myanmar-explore.com (See Myanmar Himilaya for Mt. Hkakaborazi)

#9: www.allmyanmar.com/new.allmyanmar/kayan_or_padaung.html

#10: <http://www.myanmar-image.com/myanmar/gems/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS:

• Myanmar Literature in English Translation

- Kinwin Mingyi. *London Diaries 1st Mission of a Burmese Mission to Britain 1872*, translated by Bagshawe, L.E., 2006
- Ludu U Hla. *Caged Ones. Portraits of Teenage Fellows in Prison*. Published 1958. The 1st English Edition was published in 1986. *This work was written during the 1950's when the author was imprisoned. It won the UNESCO prize award in 1958.*
- Mya Than Tint. *On the Road to Mandalay*. Published 1987. 1st English translation by Ohmar Khin & Sein Kyaw Hlaing in 1995. *Mya Than Tint is Burma's prolific writer. This book tells of poverty, hardship, the dislocation of women, and families struggling along with no support from the State. Calls for the Burmese to understand one another.*
- Nu Nu Yi – *Smile as They Bow*. Translated by Alfred Birbaum & Thi Thi Aye. Hyperion, NY 2008. *The author has over 20 years of experience in the literary field and has written 15 novels and over 100 short stories. Smile as They Bow is representative of contemporary Burmese society. The paradox of tension between religious practices and capitalist tendencies, and the social belongings of marginalized groups (women, transvestites, and poor) are all brought fourth in this book. The author was one of five Asian authors who were included in the shortlist for the inaugural 2007 Man Asian Literary Prize.*

• Myanmar Wisdom: Proverbs

- Regrets come later.
- Mangos among fruits, pork among meats, tea (laphet-tea leaves) among leaves are the best.
- You can stop speaking to someone but you cannot stop being related.
- Old cows like young grass.
- Anyone can fancy his bed as a Palace. (You can believe whatever you want.)
- It's dress in a man, bindings in a basket's edge. (Importance in a thing)
- One calls out for mother only when one stumbles.
- Two may become enemies when their ideas are the same.
- A ship load of fish gets spoiled because of one spoiled fish.
- Fisherman near fisherman, hunter near hunter
- Seek wisdom like a beggar.
- You cannot be lucky forever.

To learn more about Myanmar proverbs, please see the following website:
<http://www.mrtv3.net.mm/index.html> . Click on “Did You Know” (at the top of the page), then click on
 “Infotainment” (at the left side of the page). Select “Infotainment 5”. Select “Myanmar Proverbs.”

- **Myanmar Sayings (Rules)**

Myanmar has “Rules “known as “Lawka Niti”. There are 167 rules in the “Lawka Niti” and these rules have been handed down through the ages. Some of the rules are most outstanding and fit in today’s modern world thinking. They are observed as set rules for the Myanmar people even today.

Following are some of the outstanding from the 167 rules of the “Lawka Niti”

- There is no ruby in every mountain.
 - A puny frog, never having seen the ocean, thinks a little well-water is a lot.
 - Do not visit another's house frequently without being invited.
 - The pot not full of water is turbulent.
 - When two buffaloes trample, the grass underneath them cannot bear it
 - Children, be wise: One without wisdom is the bearer of another's burden.
- A wise man is honored day by day.
- The friend who stands by you in severe ailment, in time of scarcity, they are indeed good friends.

To learn more about “Lawka Niti”, please see the following books:

Grey, James. *Niti Literature*. London, 1887.

U Thu Kha. *Lawka Niti* (written in Myanmar. The explanations of the Rules are given in English) 4th Edition . Yangon 1998

- **Myanmar Duties**

There are also “Duties” derived from the Buddha’s teachings that are strictly observed by Theravada Buddhists in Myanmar. These duties reflect the responsibilities and expectations inherent in the reciprocal relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, and, teachers and students.

Note to Teachers: The Five Duties of both teachers and students are presented here to help develop a better understanding of the newly arrived Myanmar student and the expectations and cultural experiences that he/she brings to the classroom.

THE FIVE DUTIES OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS	
Students	Teachers
Respect teachers.	Train students to be disciplined.
Help teachers.	Teach and explain to your best.
Trust and obey teachers	Teach everything known.
Look after teachers.	Appreciate students.
Learn from teachers.	Stand up for pupils whenever needed.

To learn more about the Duties, please see the following:
Ministry of Religious Affairs, Myanmar
The Teachings of Buddha. Yangon, 1998.

- **Famous Quotes**

- Truth is a powerful weapon. Truth can be frightening and reassuring, depending on which side you are on. ~Aung San Suu Kyi (Nobel Laureate, Author of *The Voice of Hope*)
- The worth of the individual being is the most unique and precious of our assets. It must be the beginning part of all our efforts. Governments, systems, ideologies and institutions come and go, but humanity remains. ~U Thant (First Asian Secretary General of the United Nations)