

# Thura NewsViews

## Politics

### ■ Mandalay city to crack down on illegal motorbikes

Mandalay lawmakers are planning to crack down on unlicensed motorbikes and three-wheelers with more strictly enforced regulations.

Speaking to the Myanmar Times, the regional MP U Aung Kyaw Moe said, "Unlicensed vehicles should not be allowed to provide mass transportation. Supervision is needed. Three-wheelers must have licenses or they won't be allowed to pick up passengers. Some three-wheelers violate the traffic rules."

Unlike Yangon, where motorbikes are outlawed, two-wheeled vehicles are an integral part of the Mandalay economy. However, the city is also notorious for its loose enforcement of motorbike regulations. Unregistered bikes are common, and it is the norm to see motorbikes perilously loaded down with cargo or carrying entire families. Drivers also tend to ignore traffic laws and neglect to wear helmets, U Aung Kyaw Moe argued.

For three-wheeled vehicles, Mandalay mayor U Ye Lwin claimed that a committee set up to investigate three-wheelers had done a poor job. However, U Zarni Aung, regional minister for Electricity, Energy and Construction, said that 1460 unregistered three-wheelers were successfully seized between January and August of this year.

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### October Highlights

The inauguration of Myanmar Unicode migration took place with the slogan of "Let's Migrate All Together to Myanmar Unicode Standard System" in October, 2019.

Myanmar's passport ranks 95th out of 107, the lowest among ASEAN countries, which is mainly due to a lack of economic freedom.

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## Companies & Investments

Hot news regarding investments in Myanmar




### Yangon to receive much needed new bus stops

Jul 12, 2018  
U Maung Aung, secretary of the Yangon Region Transport Authority, stated this week that FMIDecaux ha

### Hello Communications to build train station along Yangon Circular Railway

Jul 12, 2018  
Through a joint venture with a local firm, Hello Communications will commence its work at Thamine st

#### Upcoming Events

- Myanmar Blockchain Forum 2018  
July 14, 2018
- Myanmar Supply Chain Summit  
August 29, 2018
- Health & Humanitarian Supply Chain Forum  
August 30, 2018
- Myanmar Global Investment Forum  
September 11, 2018 - September 12, 2018
- Myanmar Connect 2018  
September 18, 2018 - September 19, 2018

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#### Highlights

Trade with the Netherlands exceeds USD 61 million  
July 12, 2018  
Bilateral trade with the Netherlands reached USD 61.98 million in two months according to the ...



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The city of Mandalay often enters the debate about motorbikes in Yangon. Lifting Yangon’s motorbike ban could transform transportation in Myanmar’s busiest city, but supporters of the ban point out the throngs of noisy and unsafe bikers on Mandalay’s streets. Opponents of the ban claim that motorbikes would alleviate congestion in Yangon and provide working class people with an affordable means of private transportation.

■ **Chin State MPs claim regional budget unfair**

Local Chin State MPs are dissatisfied with the way the central government plans to distribute their regional budget. Officials in the Chin State parliament are claiming the MMK 155.7 billion (approximately USD 100 million) budget, which the Union government allocated for Chin State, unfairly favors the richest townships, according to a Myanmar Times report.

Myanmar’s States and Regions do not have direct control over the budget allocated by the central government. Instead, that money is disbursed to individual ministries on a project-by-project basis. Chin State is both Myanmar’s poorest state and most sparsely populated, with longstanding roadway, power, water and other infrastructure issues. However, members of the Chin State parliament complained that the budget gives preference to projects from its wealthiest and most powerful areas.

“Even before the budget was approved, MPs were not satisfied with how the budget has been allocated across the townships and had requested that Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) revise the allocation. But they approved it as there was no time to make any change,” Myanmar Times quoted Chin parliament vice speaker U Tain Htan as saying.

U Tain Htan pointed out that Chin State’s largest township, Paletwa, only received MMK 5 billion, while the state capital Hakha received MMK 23 billion. The Chin State Road Department has been granted MMK 9.2 billion for projects in Hakha, but only MMK 2 billion is slated for roadways in the more remote townships of Mindat and Kanpetlet.

U Maung Maung Win, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Planning and Finance, defended the budget, arguing that the money should be based on real-world needs and not simply on population numbers. Thus, roadways are the top priority, accounting for 40 percent of the budget, followed by power infrastructure. Supporters of the current budget said the city of Hakha should be prioritized as the state capital and center of trade and commerce.

**Economy**

■ **World Bank report praises Myanmar progress**

The World Bank’s Doing Business 2020 report ranked Myanmar among the top 20 most-improved business environments.

The report evaluates countries based on how easy it is to do business in them. It looks at factors such as access to credit, taxation, cross-border trading and registering new businesses. Although, the report will only be published on 24 October 2019, the World Bank praised Myanmar for improvements in quality control, business registration and transparency. Many of these successes are the fruit of

**Myanmar in Figures**

GDP (PPP): \$330.88bn (2017)
GDP (official ex.rate): \$59.5bn (Jan 2018)
GDP growth rate: 6.2% (2018)
Population: 54.22 mn people (Apr 2019)
Inflation: 7.1% (2018)
Foreign trade: \$35.9bn (2017-2018)
FDI: \$80.9bn (30/06/2019)
International reserves: \$5.2bn (Jan 2018)
CBM rate Kyat/\$ = 1,532K/1\$ (03/10/19)

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new initiatives from the Ministry of Commerce. One of these is the Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan (MIPP) which is designed to attract USD 200 billion in investments in the next 20 years.

MIPP reforms include a centralized property database, online company and property registration platforms and a land bank. The government plans to spend USD 8.5 billion on MIPP projects between 2021 and 2026, reported the Irrawaddy.

In 2016, the NLD government launched its ambitious Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan to develop the country socially, politically and economically. But the progress has been disappointing, with legal reforms in land rights, taxation, education, press freedom and other areas mired in red tape and corruption. Recent challenges include a United Nations call for a boycott on several Myanmar businesses, high levels of unpaid debt, and chronic tax collection issues.

However, 2019 has also seen many major economic breakthroughs. These include expanded telecom coverage, access to power and an increase in power tariffs, online business and property registration systems. If successful, a recently-approved tax amnesty may also incentivize investors to declare more taxable income and assets. With the recent progress, the Ministry of Commerce aims to be within the top 100 countries overall by next year.

#### ■ **Low growth expected for foreign direct investment**

Myanmar is unlikely to see a large increase in foreign investment this year, if any. The Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) has predicted only USD 5.8 billion of foreign direct investment (FDI) for the 2019-2020 fiscal year, which began on October 1. This is the same amount forecasted in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. However, during that year, actual investment fell far short of the prediction at only USD 4.5 billion. Most of this went towards transport and communication, the Myanmar Times reported. Additionally, USD 2.4 billion of the funds (around 60 percent) came from 25 Singaporean projects. The next largest investor was China with USD 600 million.

Although human rights abuse allegations and a UN Call call for a global boycott against military-backed businesses dampened investment from western countries, investment from Asian partners remains undaunted. Singapore has made high profile investments in property development and manufacturing, but investments from China are also on the rise. In the coming years, Myanmar expects a strong upswing in investment for infrastructure projects under China's Belt and Road initiative. Plans include new highways and railways linking China with Mandalay and other locations in central Myanmar.

"In 2019-20, we will hold more forums outside Yangon to draw more investors to the other states and regions. We will also promote investments across ASEAN and Europe. We are expecting the bulk of investments to flow into the manufacturing sector," U Thant Sin Lwin, director general of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration told the Myanmar Times.

## Companies and Investments

#### ■ **Singaporean steel company to boost Myanmar production**

A Singapore-owned steel producer announced plans to ramp up Myanmar production and manufacture the first coated steel products produced in the country.

This December, the JFE Meranti Myanmar Co. Ltd. (JMM) will begin producing new products for both export and domestic sale under the new brand ALZU. ALZU will be a joint venture between JMM and four Japanese partners. JMM CEO Sebastian Langendorf said Myanmar's booming property and infrastructure sectors will create demand for the new products, which include aluminum-zinc-alloy coated materials for industrial, commercial and residential use. JMM says they will be specifically designed to hold up in Myanmar's alternating seasons of intense heat and heavy rain.

"Many new buildings will need to be built, and old ones will need to be renovated or replaced. In order to play a key role in building the Myanmar of the future, JFE MERANTI is introducing ALZU, a durable coated-steel product that is suitable for the Myanmar climate. With that product, developers can create buildings with long-lasting integrity," the Myanmar Times quoted Langendorf as saying.

It does appear that ALZU will have no shortage of potential customers in the coming years. Although some fear that Myanmar is in the midst of a property bubble, the Myanmar government is marching forward with hundreds of millions of dollars worth infrastructure projects in railways, roadways, aviation and energy among other sectors.

In the lead-up to the ALZU launch, JMM has been making high-value agreements with producers operating in Myanmar. In August, for example, JMM signed a joint venture agreement with Thai industrial gas company BIG and Yangon Industrial Gas Trading Co., Ltd., which is building an industrial gas plant in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

■ **MAI to offer direct flights from Yangon to South Korea**

Myanmar Airways International (MAI) will launch a new route from Yangon International Airport to Incheon, South Korea, on December 3. The four weekly flights will depart Yangon at 4:45 p.m. and arrive 12:50 a.m.

The new route, which will bring its international destinations up to 10, will be the latest in a series of investments by MAI. The airline recently expanded its offering of domestic routes to 15 and has claimed it will double its fleet of aircraft by the end of this year.

The expansion comes amid a rough patch for the aviation industry. Foreign tourism has fallen below expectations, and five domestic airlines – FMI Air, Asian Wings Airways, Air Mandalay, Air Bagan, Apex and FMI Air – have closed in the last two years. This year, in particular, has seen numerous runway mishaps and technical failures.

Nevertheless, many airlines are optimistic that the cold streak is ending. MAI is not the only airline to expand. Golden Myanmar Airlines (GMA) recently added three aircraft to its fleet in order to expand its catalog of local routes. GMA CEO U Kyaw Nyein said growing tourism from China will help boost aviation.

“We see an improvement in terms of passenger numbers now compared to previously. We noticed that more round-trip tickets are being bought. And there is some improvement in terms of foreign tourist numbers,” U Kyaw Nyein said.

## Events

Name	Details	Organizer/Ministries	Contact Information
International Construction Power & Mining Exhibition	<b>Venue:</b> Fortune Plaza, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 9-11 Oct 2019	UBM Myanmar	yeemon.chen@ubm.com +95-1-378957
Medex Exhibition	<b>Venue:</b> Tatmadaw Hall, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 9-11 Oct 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com +603-2692-6888
Myanmar Textile Summit	<b>Venue:</b> Yangon <b>Date:</b> 30-31 Oct 2019	ECV International	marketing@ecvinternational.com +86-2156-797705
International Conference on Wireless Communications and Sensor Networks	<b>Venue:</b> Mandalay <b>Date:</b> 1-2 Nov 2019	SciencePlus	papers.scienceplus@gmail.com +91 8763630137
Myanmar Plas Print Pack	<b>Venue:</b> Yangon Convention Center, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 1-4 Nov 2019	Chan Chao Int'l Co., Ltd.	overseas@chanchao.com.tw +886-2-2659-6000
Oil & Gas Myanmar	<b>Venue:</b> Novotel Yangon Max, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 6-7 Nov 2019	Fireworks Myanmar	myanmar@asiafireworks.com +95-9-2501-75661
Myanmex Myanmar Marine Expo	<b>Venue:</b> Yangon Convention Center, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 7-8 Nov 2019	Fireworks Myanmar	myanmar@asiafireworks.com +95-9-2501-75661
ASEAN LPG Forum Series LPG Myanmar	<b>Venue:</b> Sedona Hotel, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 13-15 Nov 2019	Gas Academy	info@gasacademy.com.sg +65-6742-2485
Asia IoT Business Platform	<b>Venue:</b> Sedona Hotel, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 21-22 Nov 2019	Industry Platform Pte Ltd	irza@industry-platform.com +65-6733-1107
Myanbuild	<b>Venue:</b> Tatmadaw Hall, Yangon <b>Date:</b> 28-30 Nov 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com (603) 2692 6888

## Tenders

### ■ Yangon City Development Committee: Invitation for Prequalification

1. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a Loan from Japan International Co-operation Agency toward the cost of the **Greater Yangon Water Supply Improvement Project Phase 2**. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this Loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract resulting from the bidding for which this prequalification is conducted.
2. The Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) intends to prequalify contractors and/ or firms for Construction of Distribution Networks in Zone 1 (High Subzone).
  - Construction of distribution main pipe of Ductile Iron Pipe (DIP, DN600 - 1400mm) with total length of approx. 5.7 km.
  - Construction distribution network of HDPE pipe (OD 110 - 630 mm) with total length of approx. 200.0 km.
  - Replacement and new installation of house connections and water meters, with total number of 54,300 connections (including both existing and new connections)
3. It is expected that Invitation for Bids will be made in **December, 2019**.
4. Prequalification will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable guidelines for procurement under Japanese ODA loans, and is open to all applicants from eligible source countries, as defined in the loan agreement.
5. Interested eligible applicants may obtain further information from and inspect the prequalification documents at the office of Yangon City Development Committee to the Head of Department, Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation), Yangon City Development Committee from **9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**
6. A complete set of the prequalification documents may be purchased by interested applicant on the submission of a written application to the address above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of MMK 20,000. Payment shall be made only by cash.
7. Applications for prequalification should be submitted in sealed envelopes, delivered to the address below by **14th November, 2019**, and be clearly marked "Application to Prequalify for Package No. ICB-05 Construction of Distribution Networks in Zone 1 (High Subzone) under the Greater Yangon Water Supply Improvement Project Phase 2."
8. The address referred to above is
 

U Myint Zaw Than  
Head of Department, Engineering Department (Water and Sanitation), YCDC  
Office: No. 390, 12-Storey New Building, Merchant Road, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar  
Email: [kokkowa5@gmail.com](mailto:kokkowa5@gmail.com)

### ■ Ministry of Electricity and Energy: Open Tender

1. Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Electricity and Energy now invites the open tender for service of the following operations in USD.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Description	Remark
(1)	OS - 001 (2019-2020)	24th Yadana Offshore Domestic Gas Pipeline Free Span Survey	USD

2. The tender closing date and time are **15th November, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.**
3. Tender document shall be available during office hours from **16th October, 2019** at the Finance Department, Manma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. 44 complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

■ **Ministry of Transport and Communications: Expression of Interest**

1. Myanmar Railways has signed Build Operate Transfer (BOT) concession agreements with Meeyahta Development Limited (MDL) and Peninsula Yangon Limited (PYL) on 23rd July 2016 to implement International Hotel Project and Landmark Project respectively, which are located at No. 372, Bogyoke Aung San Road, Pabedan Township, Yangon Region.
2. To enable monitoring and controlling of the projects implementation as stated above, the Project Management Unit (PMU)/ Project Assurance Committee (PAC) was formed.
3. The Myanmar Railways (MR) would like to **invite reputable local and/ or international Project Assurance Services Company (PASC) to assist PMU/ PAC and to undertake Project Assurance activities**. The objectives of Project Assurance activities are to monitor validity and viability of the projects in terms of progress to date and prediction of project outcome. The Quality (specification), Time (schedule) and Cost always have to be bounded to ensure ongoing viability.
4. The PASC is responsible to the Myanmar Railways (Owner of the projects, shall be called Project Owner hereon) for the above stated projects. The projects have been started from 1st November,2018 and the construction period is expected to be four years and any Extension of Time (EOT) granted thereon. The Project Assurance activities are required to be carried out for the rest of the construction period including EOT (if any).
5. EOI Documents and Background information of the proposed Project Assurance Services Company (PASC) could be obtained from the Deputy General Manager, Supply Department, Myanmar Railways, Corner of 51st Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar under the telephone numbers: +95-1- 291985 and +95-1-291994 with effect from **23rd September, 2019** during office hours.
6. The completed proposed EOI Documents shall be submitted at above mentioned address not later than **02:00 p.m. on 28th October, 2019**. (Submission by mail, Email or Courier Services shall NOT be entertained.)
7. Enquiries can be made by contacting U Kyaw Moe Zaw, Deputy General Manager (Supply) under the telephone numbers: +95-9-5191309/ +95-1-291994 or U Aung Thu Latt, General Manager (Lower Myanmar) under the telephone numbers: +95-9-5009653/ +95-1-298594.