

Thura NewsViews

Politics

■ Yangon to bring back paid parking

Yangon ended fees for car parking in 2014, but the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) will soon bring them back. YCDC announced a plan to build “smart car parks” around the city that will offer paid parking. The new car parks will coincide with the end of the no-fee policy, which city officials say has been ineffective.

At a press conference, YCDC announced that it is currently evaluating six tender bids to build the smart car parks. “Now, we are analyzing the tenders [from] the companies. One of them will be selected to install the smart car parks,” said YCDC spokesperson U Lin Khaing.

Officials say the new car parks and new policy on paid-parking aim to ease congestion in the city. High vehicle taxes in Myanmar’s pre-democratic era made cars prohibitively expensive for many and thus kept traffic relatively low. But now there are roughly 600,000 vehicles registered in Yangon, and the daytime roadways are usually jammed with cars. The narrower city streets are usually cluttered with parked vehicles, which makes traffic even worse. New private car parks, YCDC believes, will provide people with convenient places to leave their cars and also provide some revenue for the city.

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This Week’s Highlights

ADB approves a financing package of over USD 50 million to help upgrade 152 kilometers of roads in Ayeyawady and Magway.

Vietnam, aims to boost its trade exchanges with Myanmar says director of the Investment and Trade Promotion Centre of HCM City.

Tourists entries through international airports up 41% YoY reveals Ministry of Hotels and Tourism latest data.

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Myanmar Economics and Politics

Weekly Newsletter



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Companies & Investments

Hot news regarding investments in Myanmar



Filipino giant to partner with Myanmar tycoon

Nov 14, 2019

A major Filipino corporation will invest USD 238 million into two companies owned by Serge Pun, one



DHL opens new Yangon warehouse

Nov 14, 2019

Global logistics and shipping giant DHL Supply Chain will ramp up its Myanmar presence with its first

Upcoming Events

Asia IoT Business Platform
November 21, 2019 - November 22, 2019

Green Power
November 28, 2019 - November 30, 2019

Myanbuild
November 28, 2019 - November 30, 2019

Myanmar Hardware Expo
November 28, 2019 - November 30, 2019

Myanwater
November 28, 2019 - November 30, 2019

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Highlights

YSH to increase stake in Digital Money Myanmar (Wave Money)
November 14, 2019

Singapore Stock Exchange-listed Yoma Strategic Holdings (YSH) has agreed to

■ **Shan fighting again disrupts trade**

Ongoing fighting in Shan State has once again begun disrupting land trade with China. Recent operations by the Northern Alliance of armed ethnic groups has kicked off fresh skirmishes along one of Myanmar’s most important trade routes, and freight traffic has slowed or halted, according to truck drivers interviewed by the Myanmar Times.

“The fight has been going on for three days. Some trucks are making the journey while monitoring the situation, others had to turn back. Overall, I think the situation is not safe enough for trucks to pass through,” one anonymous truck driver told the Times.

The recent flare up in violence was apparently spurred by operations by the Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), one of five Northern Alliance members. Coordinated Northern Alliance attacks in Shan State kicked off a new period of fighting along the highway between Mandalay and the border town of Muse. The conflict shut down all trade at Muse for a brief time. The disruption caused the Chinese government to pressure both sides to make a peace agreement. Although at times both military and rebel forces have declared unilateral cease-fires, efforts to strike a lasting peace have been unsuccessful.

Economy

■ **Myanmar legalizes foreign remittances**

Independent cash remittance services can now receive official licenses to transfer money between Myanmar and other countries. The Central Bank of Myanmar will issue the licenses mainly to overseas employment agencies.

Myanmar people have been able to use bank transfers to send money to and from the country. However, many of the roughly 5 million Myanmar people living abroad do not have access to end-to-end banking, and many international banks do not accept money from Myanmar. Thus, migrant workers, especially undocumented migrants, have been forced to use informal and illegal channels to send money back home. After decades of development of a grey market, although these “hundi” transfer services can be remarkably secure and reliable, the Myanmar government does not gain any revenue from them. A 2017 report in Frontier magazine estimated that around USD 2.5 billion in funds enter and leave Myanmar via illegal channels.

With the new license, agencies will be able to legally transfer money even for undocumented workers. Applicants must provide a deposit of MMK 100 million, and may transfer a maximum of USD 5,000 per month per worker. The Central Bank claims the new licensing scheme will both provide new revenue and help it keep better records of the money entering and leaving Myanmar. But it remains to be seen whether the new, legal transfer scheme will come to replace the decades-old hundi industry.

■ **IFC: Myanmar should go solar**

Solar can help Myanmar can fill its electricity shortage and reduce the cost of power, the International Finance Solar can help Myanmar fill its electricity shortage and reduce the cost of power, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) argued in a recent report. The IFC (which is the private sector financing arm of the World Bank Group) claimed that investing in solar projects could provide

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/\$ = 1,516K/1\$ (20/11/19)

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Myanmar with 700 megawatts of currently untapped power generation capacity.

“Several commercial and industrial businesses are in a good position to take advantage of the fast-growing distributed solar generation sector through private-sector led solutions and financing,” Isabel Chatterton, of the IFC’s Asia Pacific team, told the Myanmar Times.

Currently only around 60 percent of Myanmar people have access to the national power grid. The government aims for total electrification by 2030, which will require USD 2-3 billion dollars in new investments. However solar power accounts for only a small fraction of Myanmar’s planned energy mix. The report, the “Myanmar Distributed Generation Scoping Study” released this month, claims that Myanmar’s solar goals are not nearly ambitious enough.

The report continued that solar could aid Myanmar’s power goals in the long term as well as the short term. Surging demand for power caused rolling blackouts in Yangon during the previous hot season, and the government is scrambling to boost its generating capacity with emergency tenders for gas-fired power plants and imported liquid natural gas. In July, the government raised electricity tariffs, doubling or tripling power prices for most households. Solar, the IFC argued, should be part of the solution to these problems.

Companies and Investments

■ Environmental groups slam Myanmar's first coal plant

Environmental and civil society groups are criticizing the environmental impact assessment (EIA) for Myanmar’s first coal power plant. Chinese firm Wuxu Huaguang Electric Power Engineering commissioned the EIA after it took over the power plant, located in Tigyt, Shan State, in 2016. But after reviewing the assessment, a consortium of organizations claimed that the assessment was not comprehensive and does not ensure that the communities and ecosystems around the plant are being protected.

The Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability (MATA) conducted the review in partnership with EarthRights International, Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide, Greenpeace International and Hydrocology Consulting.

“When we, MATA, asked help from experts to read the report they found that the report deviates from international standards and our own national standards,” MATA member Ko Aung Kyaw Moe told the Myanmar Times.

MATA represents over 450 individuals and civil society groups across Myanmar, and its criticisms are not meaningless to the future of the plant and its operations. Myanmar communities have been historically suspicious of Chinese-backed power plants. One notorious example is the Myitsone Dam, a proposed 6000-megawatt hydroelectric plant that has been mired in controversy for years.

■ China to invest USD 130 million in agriculture

A Chinese state-owned enterprise will invest in three agricultural centers around Myanmar valuing USD 130 million. The Chinese CITIC Construction Group will partner with the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) and the Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation (MAPCO) to establish the centers, which will be in Ayeyarwady Region, Mandalay Region and Rakhine State, according to the Myanmar Times.

The centers will be meant to improve the quality of agricultural products in Myanmar. They will include crop dryers and post-harvest storage warehouses, according to an MRF spokesperson. The improvements could eventually help Myanmar’s agricultural industry access new export markets. The majority of Myanmar’s workers are farmers, although Myanmar’s agricultural exports are low relative to the volume it produces. Part of the problem is that Myanmar farming practices usually fail to meet international standards of fertilizer and pesticide use and other practices.

Asia remains Myanmar’s main agriculture export market, and China has been working to help Myanmar boost its capacity. The MRF has also recently signed an MOU with China to export 250,000 tonnes of rice. An industry report by the World Bank said “there are good market prospects to accommodate higher rice exports from Myanmar over the next 10-15 years. China is becoming a large net importer of Myanmar rice. The European Union has opened its markets for duty free imports from Myanmar.”

Events

Name	Details	Organizer/Ministries	Contact Information
Asia IoT Business Platform	Venue: Sedona Hotel, Yangon Date: 21-22 Nov 2019	Industry Platform Pte Ltd	irza@industry-platform.com +65 6733 1107
Myanmar Hardware Expo	Venue: Yangon, Myanmar Date: 28-30 Nov 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com +603 2692 6888
Green Power	Venue: Yangon, Myanmar Date: 28-30 Nov 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com +603 2692 6888
Myanwater	Venue: Tatmadaw Hall, Yangon Date: 28-30 Nov 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com +603 2692 6888
Myanbuild	Venue: Tatmadaw Hall, Yangon Date: 28-30 Nov 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com +603 2692 6888
Electricity & Energy Expo	Venue: Tatmadaw Hall, Yangon Date: 29 Nov-01 Dec 2019	Dagon Exhibitions	dagonexhibitions@gmail.com +959 450098008
International Conference on Applied Earth Sciences in Myanmar and Neighboring Regions	Venue: Novotel Yangon Max, Yangon Date: 30 Nov-01 Dec 2019	MAESA Myanmar	organizingcommittee@maesa.org
Agrilivestock Myanmar	Venue: Myanmar Expo, Yangon Date: 30 Nov-01 Dec 2019	AMB Tarsus Exhibitions Sdn Bhd	support@ambtarsus.com +603 2692 6888
GDG DevFest Yangon 2019	Venue: Taw Win Garden Hotel, Yangon Date: 08 Dec- 08 Dec 2019	Google Developer Group Yangon	gdgyangon@gmail.com

Tenders

■ Ministry of Transport and Communications: Open Tender

1. Department of Civil Aviation under the Ministry of Transport and Communications now invites open tender for supply of the following items in foreign currency/MMK.

No.	Description	Quantity	Remark
1	Spare Parts for Selex Doppler VHF Omni-directional Radio Range/ Distance Measuring Equipment (DVOR/DME)	1 Lot	Foreign Currency
2	Spare Parts for Selex Instrument Landing System/ Distance Measuring Equipment (ILS/DME)	1 Lot	Foreign Currency
3	Spare Parts for Satellite Station (VSAT)	1 Lot	Foreign Currency
4	Spare Parts for Remote Control Air-Ground (RCAG)	1 Lot	Foreign Currency
5	VHF Transmitter & Receiver	5 Sets	Foreign Currency
6	Secondary Satellite Link (VSAT)	1 Set	Foreign Currency
7	Extension of Satellite Station (VSAT)	1 Set	Foreign Currency
8	Automatic Dependent Surveillance - Broadcast (ADS-B) Ground Station (Phase-1)	1 Set	Foreign Currency
9	Test Instrument	1 Lot	Foreign Currency
10	Upgrading Domestic Airports AWOS System	1 Lot	Foreign Currency
11	270° Air Traffic Control (ATC) Tower Simulator (Phase-1)	1 Set	Foreign Currency
12	ILS with Lower Power DME	1 Set	Foreign Currency
13	VSAT/RCAG Station (Very Small Aperture Terminal/ Remote Control Air Ground)	1 Set	Foreign Currency
14	EMACS System Software Upgrading	1 Lot	Foreign Currency
15	X-Ray Machine (Check Baggage)	6 Set	Foreign Currency
16	X-Ray Machine (Hand Carry)	6 Set	Foreign Currency
17	Explosive Trace Detection Machine	10 Nos	Foreign Currency
18	X-Ray CBT Software	1 No	Foreign Currency
19	Aircraft Recovery Mat	1 Set	MMK
20	Aluminum Passenger Seat (4 Connected Seats)	500 Sets	MMK
21	Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Vehicle (ARFFV)	1 No	MMK
22	Upgrading Airfield Lighting System Nyaung Oo Airport	1 Lot	MMK
23	Upgrading Airfield Lighting System Myitkyina Airport	1 Lot	MMK
24	Spare Parts for Airfield Lighting System	1 Lot	MMK
25	Upgrading Airfield Lighting System for Thandwe Airport	1 Lot	MMK

No.	Description	Quantity	Remark
26	Airconditioning System for Nyaung Oo Airport	1 Lot	MMK
27	Automatic Weather Observation System	1 Set	MMK
28	Upgrading International Airports AWOS System	1 Lot	MMK
29	Spare Part for Aeronautical Information Management (AIM)	1 Lot	MMK

- The tender documents can be obtained at its office Yangon International Airport, Mingaladon Township, Yangon starting from **12th November, 2019** to **29th November, 2019** within officer hours.
- The tender documents must be submitted before or on **9th December, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.**
- Further information can be obtained at its office within office hours under the telephone numbers: +95-1-533009, 95-1-533030 ext. 521. under the telephone numbers: +95-1-291985 and +95-1-291994.

■ **Ministry of Transport and Communications: Invitation for Bids**

- The government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for **Yangon Mandalay Railway Improvement Project Phase I**. The bid is invited by Myanmar Railways as follows:

Invitation for Bid	Description: Train Monitoring System Works	Issuing Date	Closing Date & Time	Non-refundable Document Fee
IFB No: MR/BD 106	Train Monitoring System (TMS) Works (From Pazundaung Station to Pyuntaza Station)	15 November, 2019	17 January, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.	USD 1,000

- Bidding will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable guidelines for procurement under Japanese ODA loans, and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries, as defined in the loan agreement.
- The eligible nationality of the contractor (s) shall be Japan in case of the prime contractor.
- In case where the prime contractor is a joint venture, such joint venture will be eligible provided that the nationality of the lead partner is Japan, that the nationality of the other partners is Japan and/or the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and that the total share of work of Japanese partners in the joint venture is more than fifty percent of the contract amount.
- The Myanmar Railways under the Ministry of Transport and communications now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for **Train Monitoring System (TMS) Works** as described as above. The provisions in the Instructions to bidders and in general conditions of contract are the provisions of the standard bidding documents under Japanese ODA loans for procurement of small works.
- A complete set of the bidding documents may be purchased and inspected by interested bidders upon submission of a written application to the address below during office hours.
- The address referred to above is
 Managing Director, Myanmar Railways, Ministry of Transport and Communications
 Office: Nay Pyi Taw Railway Station Compound, Pobba Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
 Telephone: +95-67-77024
 Email: dgmplan.rail@mrt.gov.mm and dgm.planning.mr@gmail.com