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Governance of AI



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In Need of a Wolf Warrior



What do Jaishanker, Wang Yi and the latest Qin Gang have in common? They belong to the clan of what media termed as the wolf warriors.

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May the Post be with You!



Brief History

Long before your time, in 1872 to be exact, in the western most city of Sittwe, there opened the very first post office, a precursor to the present day Myanmar Post.

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INSIDER INTERVIEW

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THE MYANMAR INSIDER



Dear MI Readers....

This issue is unique because in the history of MI, we have never had that many interviews compiled within one issue.

All the media bodies, be its World Association of Press Councils, Foreign Correspondence Clubs, India Press Association, Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development, or Iraq Press Council, are clamoring for control of fake news and governance of digital social media. We have gathered insights for you through interviews with them. Upcoming trends in global media development and lack of a solution for malicious information content can be seen from these conversations. With the rapid development of AI, troll farms that support the spread of fake news require even less resources to run. We cover Ai governance in this issue as well. In fighting the fake news that nearly destroy Myanmar, we are in need of a wolf warrior who would and could fight back misinformation spread based on Western agenda. We have an article on that too.

Not forgetting our feature interviews, we have a chat with the news CEO of Manulife Myanmar, where he shares his perspectives on developing the life insurance market in Myanmar.

Watch out for flu and dengue in this coming rainy season too.

Yours Sincerely, Jeffery Windsor



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Manulife Myanmar's New CEO Shares His Perspectives

Charlie Greene

What inspired you to take on this role and what do you hope to achieve in this position?

Having spent all my professional life serving the Life Insurance industry, I am passionate about the purpose it serves for families. I am equally passionate about dedicating my energy to markets where it is still at a developing stage. In a market like Myanmar, with ~ 0.10% penetration rate for Life Insurance, we have a lot to do and contribute to bringing this important confidence-enhancing product to the families of Myanmar. Global players such as Manulife can play a very important role in bringing product expertise, technology and skills for employees and Advisors into Myanmar. As the CEO of Myanmar, I would like to play a role in firmly establishing Manulife as a leading Life and Health Insurance solutions provider. This will involve developing a deep understanding of local customer needs and preferences and tailoring our products and services to meet those needs. I believe that by leveraging our global

expertise and working closely with our distribution partners, we can build a strong brand that resonates with customers across the country. Additionally, I want to ensure that we operate sustainably and responsibly benefiting our customers and the broader community. This means prioritizing the needs of our customers and investing in initiatives that promote life insurance literacy and inclusion.

Explain briefly about your background and your career before you join Manulife Myanmar.

I was recently CEO and General

Director of BIDV-MetLife Life Insurance and managed MetLife's joint venture with one of the largest government-owned banks (BIDV) in Vietnam. Together with my team, we built a fast-paced life insurance company implemented a hybrid model that combines digital with bancassurance and agency for providing better services to our customers than before. Through this, I was able to learn that when digitalization is combined with face-to-face human interaction, it improves the speed, efficiency and experience of the customer and employees.

Before working for 7 years in Vietnam, I was in the Hong Kong Re-

"In a market like Myanmar, with ~ 0.10% penetration rate for Life Insurance, we have a lot to do and contribute"

gional Office as COO and had the unique opportunity to supervise Operations for markets like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Australia. The experience of working in Life Insurance in the markets of Asia has reaffirmed my belief that this product serves tremendous value for families in health, protection and long-term savings.

What are the opportunities and challenges you see in the Myanmar and how do you intend to leverage Manulife's strengths to address them?

Myanmar has significant upsides with young population, growing middle class, digitally savvy customer base, low insurance penetration and a growing awareness about Life Insurance products. The Insurance regulators (FRD) are collaborating very hard with the members of the Insurance Industry to create a long-term and sustainable growth model for the customers.

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There are some challenges which the Life Insurance Industry needs to tackle jointly. The biggest challenge in the market is awareness and education about Life Insurance which remains low.

The development of Agency and licensing of Agents plays a key role in developing Life Insurance awareness and penetration. As an example, in another developing market like Vietnam, there are ~1 million Agents for a population size of ~100Mn. So, for every 100 potential customers, there is an Agent who has been trained and licensed to advise and prospect. In comparison, Myanmar has only about 7000 agents today for a population of ~55Mn. As an industry, we need to build our

Agent numbers so that the customers have access to an Agent for trusted and professional advice.

Secondly, while building our Agent numbers, we also need to ensure that the Agents are provided a step-by-step learning and licensing approach so that the advice to the customer is of the highest quality. Insurance products can be complex. Simple products like Term and Endowment require less learning time and experience for the Agent. Whereas complex products like Universal Life and Investment Linked require significant experience and more detailed learning and licensing requirement for the Agents.

Manulife has a deep understanding of the insurance industry and the needs of customers in different markets around the world. This knowledge and expertise will be critical in helping us develop innovative products and services tailored to the unique needs of customers in Myanmar. We look forward to partnering with other insurance companies and Myanmar Insurance Association in ensuring that the industry develops in a responsible manner for Myanmar customers.

How do you plan to build and motivate a strong team in Myanmar to achieve the company's goals?

Building and motivating a strong team is critical to the success of any organisation and at Manulife Myanmar, we are committed to creating a culture of fun, learning and development that attracts and retains the best talent in the industry. We believe that providing opportunities for growth and development is essential to keeping our team members motivated and engaged.

Our focus in Myanmar is to hire a diverse and inclusive team which is keen to learn, challenge, collaborate and is passionate about serving customers. We provide extensive training, both in-house as well as through our partnerships with associations like Life Office Management Association (LOMA). Every year, our employees also get a chance to learn and upgrade their knowledge through various interactions from Manulife colleagues in other developing and developed markets. That enables us to have world-class systems, processes and knowledge in Myanmar for our customers.

What are some of the key lessons you have learned in your career so far and how do you plan to apply them?

Given the nature of our business, it is all about providing consistent service and delivering on long-term promises. Building a strong sales force is important to expand our reach. But equally important is to develop a strong service platform for our customers. Since we do longterm insurance sales which covers customers for 10 years or more, it is important that the service provided is reliable and trusted. It ensures that the customer stays with the company for the entire duration and the family can trust the service. At Manulife, we put a lot of focus and I am proud that our persistence (a measure of customer loyalty) is one of the best in the industry.

How do you plan to communicate Manulife's commitment to families and their financial security to the broader com-

munity?

Manulife's commitment to families and their financial security involves engaging with a broader community, partnering with like-minded organizations, providing educational resources, leveraging our team's expertise and delivering on our promises

For example, we leverage the expertise and experience of our team at Manulife Myanmar which is comprised of experienced professionals who are dedicated to helping families achieve their financial goals. We work closely with our customers to understand their needs, develop customized financial plans and provide ongoing support and guidance while remaining committed to delivering on our promises and providing excellent customer service. We know that trust is earned over time, and we are committed to building long-lasting relationships with our customers based on trust, transparency, and reliability.

What advice would you give to families in Myanmar who are looking to protect and secure their financial future?

Thank you for asking this important question. Families in Myanmar should consider insurance products that meet their unique needs and circumstances. In general, Myanmar is a young country. So my first advice would be to select products which are long-term in nature. Additionally, health insurance can provide families with access to quality healthcare services without worrying about the financial burden that comes with medical bills. By paying regular premium through the policy term, families can ensure that their loved ones are financially protected in the event of unforeseen circumstances

At Manulife Myanmar, we are committed to helping families achieve financial security and stability. We offer a range of insurance products to help families in Myanmar protect their financial future and provide peace of mind.

How does Manulife work with local partners and stakeholders to better understand the needs of families in Myanmar and address their concerns?

We understand the importance of working closely with our customers, community leaders, officials, and other key stakeholders to better understand the needs of families in Myanmar and address their concerns. Our partnerships with local organisations and stakeholders enable us to gain valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities that families face in managing their financial futures.

We believe that by influencing our strengths and working closely with our partners, we can overcome the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities in the Myanmar market. We are committed to building a sustainable and responsible business that creates value for all stakeholders and we look forward to playing a key role in the development of the insurance industry in Myanmar.

In addition to it, we have partnered with local hospitals and health-care providers to offer innovative health insurance solutions that provide families with access to quality healthcare services. And for education, we do the same as well. It is an essential part of our commitment to delivering personalized service and support for families in need and challenges that families face and developing innovative solutions that meet specific needs and circumstances.



Private Operators Invited to Broadcast Channels on MRTV

Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) has invited private entrepreneurs who want to broadcast DTH (Direct to Home) Free to Air channels to MRTV DTH Platform to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI).

With the aim of further developing private media businesses, the installation and broadcasting of standard definition (SD) and high definition (HD) television channels on a wider scale through the MRTV DTH Platform (Direct to Home) system will be allowed. It is necessary for those wishing to join the broadcasting business must mention eight points, including their previous work and experience, current investment and financial assets, in the EOI.

Those who are willing to submit the EOI should contact Myanma Radio and Television in Nay Pyi Taw (Tat-



kon) by June 8, either in person or via email. The EOI applicants will be verified and allowed to apply for a Request for Proposal (RFP), according to Myanmar Radio and Television. The MRTV DTH Plat-

form (Direct to Home) system was started on February 1, 2022.

Terrorists Attack on AHA Convoy in Shan State



NNCP (NUG, NLD, CRPH, PDF) Terrorists attacked the convoy



heading to Hsihseng from Taunggyi to deliver supplies to temporarily

displaced persons in Yayphyu Village of Hsihseng Township in Shan

State (South).

On the morning of May 7, the representatives of the AHA Centre, Indonesia and Singapore Embassies to Myanmar, went to Hsihseng from Taunggyi with the members of the state security force. When they arrived about 200 metres north of Nanaw village of Hsihseng, the terrorists shot them using small weapons and the security forces launched a counterattack. The regional security force conduct operations near the vicinity of that place. No one was injured and some bullets hit one of the cars.

RTAD to Confiscate Wheel Tax if New Number Plates are Not Installed

Road Transport Administration Department (RTAD) has announced that wheel tax cards will be confiscated from vehicles that have not been installed with new embossed number plates.

If the vehicles without new number plates are found, from the second week of May, the owners will be fined 5,000 Kyats and if they are found out in the third week, wheel tax cards will be confiscated. Wheel tax cards will be returned only when the vehicles have been installed with new number plates.



IBM on Hiring Pause as AI Proves its Ability

CEO of IBM said he was eyeing to downsize the tech giant's back office workforce by nearly a third because those jobs are being made redundant by advances in artificial intelligence (Ai). In an interview with Bloomberg on Monday, Arvind Krishna said that his company would enact a pause in hiring in those roles, and potentially reduce the payroll by 7,800 jobs over several years.

"These non-customer-facing roles amount to roughly 26,000 workers," Krishna said. "I could easily see 30% of that getting replaced by Ai and automation over a five-year period." Back office employees are only a fraction of IBM's roughly 260,000 workers, and the company has continued to hire in certain roles, even after recently letting go about 5,000 workers in other areas, the Bloomberg report said



Trump Found Liable for Sexual Abuse



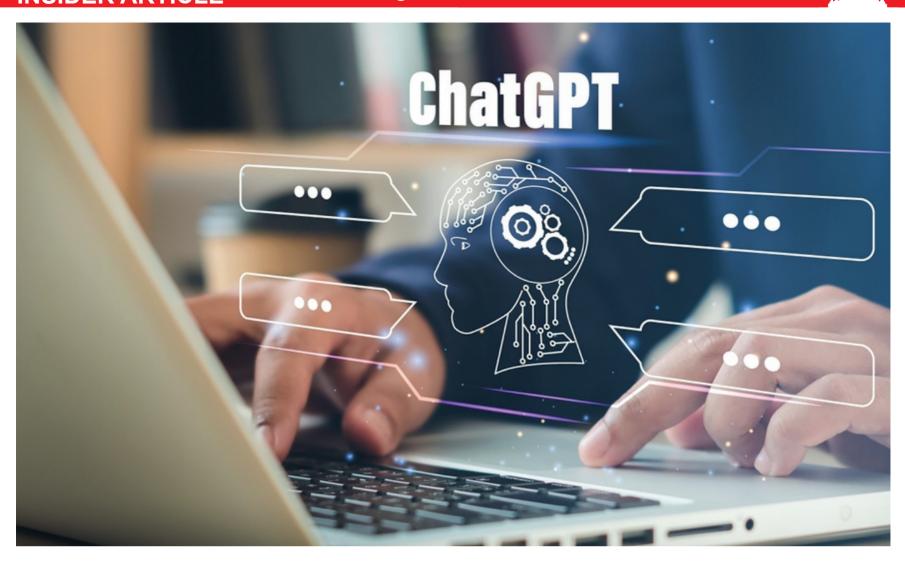


A New York jury found the ex-US President Donald Trump liable for sexually abusing and defaming an American former magazine columnist and ordered the ex-president to pay her \$5 million in damages. The nine jurors rejected E. Jean Carroll's accusation of rape but unanimously upheld her other complaints in the closely watched civil trial, following less than three hours of deliberations. It marks the first time Trump has faced legal consequences over a string of sexual assault allegations dating back decades.









Governance of AI

Charlie Greene

Chatgpt was released in Nov 22. It gathered a million users within a week. And 100 million within 2 months. This generative ai has been so good and powerful that the potential of a doomsday scenario has been voiced out by many including Elon Mask and Steve Wozniak.

Prior to the launch, in August 2022, ai Impacts, US research group, surveyed 700 machine learning researchers about their predictions on ai risks. The result yielded a 5% probability of AI causing 'extremely bad' outcome, such as human extinction.

Li Fei Fei, AI luminary at Stanford, talks of a 'civilisational moment' for ai. Geoff Hinton, AI bigwig from Uni of Toronto, said, the judgement day is not inconceivable. Robert Trager of Centre for Governance on AI, said one risk of such large language models (llms) is "making it easier to do lots of things - and thus allowing more people to do them (harm)"

In a recent survey of super forecasters and ai experts, median ai expert gave 3.9% chance to an existential catastrophe (<5,000 humans sur-

vived) owing to ai by 2100. Median super forecaster, gave only 0.38%. The difference may be probably be due to field selection bias by ai researchers.

So, how do we control AI?

Before Chatgpt4 (C4), openai used several approaches to reduce risk of accidents and misuse. One is called 'reinforcement learning from human feedback' (rlhf). Rlhf asked humans to provide feedback on whether the model response to a prompt was appropriate. Then the model is

updated based upon feedback. The goal is to reduce the likelihood of producing harmful content when given similar prompts in the future. The drawback is that humans often disagree about what counts as 'appropriate'. Rlhf also made Chatgpt4 far more capable in conversation, thus propel the AI race.

Another approach, borrowed from war gaming, is 'red-teaming'. Openai worked with Alignment Research Centre (ARC) to put its model thru a battery of tests. The red-teamer job was to attack the model by getting it to do something it should not, in the hope of anticipating mischief in the real world. Another idea is to use AI to police AI. Sam Bowman of New York University and of Anthropic AI firm, has written on topic like "Constitutional AI", in which a secondary AI model is asked to assess whether the output from main model adheres to certain 'constitutional principles'. In general, governments can approach to control AI using one of the following three strategies:

- I. Light touch with no new rules or regulatory bodies. The approach is to apply existing regulations to AI systems. e.g., UK, US.
- II. Tougher line The government would create law categories for different uses of AI classified according to risk, with stringent monitoring and disclosure. Some AI to be banned such as subliminal ad and those with remote biometrics. The government would impose fines for non compliance. E.g., EU.

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"In general,
governments can
approach to control AI
using one of the following
three strategies:"

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III. Toughest - Under this strategy, the government would treat AI like medicines, with a dedicated regulator, strict testing and pre-approval requirements. E.g., China, where AI has to undergo security review before release.

Even if efforts to produce safe models work, future AI models could work around them. E.g., AI models have already made new discoveries in biology. Not inconceivable that one day design dangerous biochemicals themselves.

General attitude of the world seems to be better safe than sorry. Dr Li of Stanford thinks we 'should dedicate more, much more resources' to research on AI alignment and governance. Dr Trager of Centre for Governance on AI, on the other hand, supports creation of bureaucracies to govern ai standards and do safety research.

In the meantime, AI researchers supporting much more funding for safety research has grown from 14% in 2016 to 35% in 2023. ARC is also considering developing a safety standard for AI.

Immediate impacts before the judgement day

The probability of the end of the world may be low enough to cast aside, yet everyone seems to agree that the immediate impact of AI would be on jobs. The big tech have already retrenched tens of thou-

sands of staff in the last twelve months alone. These jobs are not coming back. Tyna Eloundou of openai and colleagues estimated that 'around 80% of US workforce could have at least 10% of their tasks affected by intro of llms. Based on Ms Eloundou's estimates, ai would result in a net loss of around 15% of US jobs. Some could move to industries experiencing workers shortages, s.a. hospitality. A big rise in unemployment would follow, may be up to 15% reached during covid. Edward Felten of Princeton University and colleagues, conducted a similar exercise, legal services, accountancy, travel agencies come out at or near the top of professions most likely to lose out. According to him, 14 of top 20 occupations most exposed to AI are teachers.

Goldman Sachs prediction is somewhat more positive, stating the widespread adoption of AI could drive 7% or almost 7T increase in annual global gdp over 10 years period. Academic studies predict 3% rise in annual labor productivity in firms that adopt AI.

Another concern from this has been who would eventually benefit most from AI. AI profits could end up in just one org-openAI. Generative ai has some real monopolistic characteristics. C4 reportedly cost more than \$100m to train. There is also a lot of proprietary knowledge about data for training the models plus the users feedback.

Should you be worried about that job loss?

In areas of economy with heavy state involvement such as healthcare and education, technology change tends to be super slow. Government may have policy goals such as maximisation of employment levels, that are inconsistent with improved efficiency. These industries are likely to be unionised and unions are good at preventing job losses, according to Mark Andreessen of Andreessen Horowitz. Only the bravest government would replace teachers with

A paper by David Autor of MIT and colleagues, said about 60% of the jobs in today America did not exist

in 1940. The 'fingerprint technician' was added in 2000. 'Solar photovoltaic technician' in 2018. AI economy is likely to create new occupations which today cannot even be imagined. Personal computer was invented in 1970s. In 1987, Robert Solow, an economist, famously declared that computer age was 'everywhere except for productivity stats'

Jobs beyond the reach of AI are blue collar works, such as construction and farming, accounting for 20% of rich world GDP and in industries where human to human contact is an inherent part of the service, such as hospitality and healthcare.

In summary, we can be less concerned about job losses and individual impacts of AI. We should be more concerned about the balance of power, changing of the society and nations and destruction of them, simply based on the extrapolation of how damaging social media is on Myanmar alone. Just imagine, C4 is a godsend for a nimby fighting against a government plan or a development program. In five minutes, he can produce a well written 1000 page objection. Someone then has to read and respond. Spam emails would be harder to detect. Fraud cases would soar. Banks will need to spend more on preventing attacks and compensating people who lose out. Combine that with auto creating of comments in social media, it would bring fake news and Mal-information to a whole new level. That's exactly the future without the strict governance of AI!

"The big tech have already retrenched tens of thousands of staff in the last twelve months alone. These jobs are not coming back."





In Need of a Wolf Warrior

Tim M Htut

What do Jaishanker, Wang Yi and the latest Qin Gang have in common? They belong to the clan of what media termed as the wolf warriors.

Even though internet defines wolf warrior diplomacy as confrontational and combative, with associated policies on social media and in interviews, as well as using physical violence against protestors and dissidents, the approach has been a breath of fresh air for many non-Western countries, trying hard to stand on its own two feet, fighting propaganda and fake news agenda. Russia has been for years, trying to fight Western agenda. China created the wolf warrior approach. India now has its own warriors. Even African countries are following suit. We can now see how Namibia President talking back aggressively

to President of German parliament or Congo President shutting down French's Macron at a press conference, following the examples of the big three. The West simply cannot get rid of their colonial attitudes and the feeling that they are superior beings and hence Asians and Africans should kowtow to them. That innermost feeling propels them into thinking that they always have a right to be above everyone else or be the judge in the international community and have a free-pass to meddle in the internal affairs of other countries.

The Western world participation in internal conflicts or individual nations were undeniable, waging proxy wars or turning countries into

"Myanmar has been so defensive in its approach that the fake news and negativities are drowning out the facts. We need our own pack of wolf warriors, who would fight back"

failed states, in the context of planting democratic trees that would bear fruits of democracy. Look at Iraq, Syria, Libya in the recent past. I am sure citizens these three beautiful countries are so full enjoying the fruits of democracy tree planted by the Americans. Vietnamese people were eating oranges given by the Americans during the 1970s, those with the term 'agent' in front.

According to a recent article in the Economist, since 1991, there has been a 12 fold increase in proportion of civil wars involving foreign forces. Foreign meddlers have fewer costs - their own cities not destroyed, so they have less incentive to make peace. Plus weapons to fuel the wars came mainly from the West, beefing up the coffers of weapon manufacturers.

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As Murdoch said at Fox trial, "It's not about red or blue, it's all about the green!".

Civil wars are already concentrated in hot, poor countries; as the climate grows harsher, the belt of bloodshed around the equator will surely grow wider. And based on cost benefit analysis, conflicts outside of the West, created more benefits for the West. Cost are minuscule as most went towards underground activities, rights groups and NGOs, to encourage more infighting and hatred, through propaganda and fake news stories. We always wonder why it took China less than a month to facilitate peace between Saudi and Iran (Sunni and Shia) when it took the West forever. May be they do not want them to have peace.

How about Myanmar?

With all the western world media only having negative views about Myanmar, it is high time that we train our own group of wolf warriors to confront and combat the fake news and undue influence, underneath the veil of democracy. As I mentioned in my previous 'Where the West got it Wrong' article, they refused to even listen to the elections fraud, let alone acknowledge it. They continued to support NNCP terrorists, despite undeniable evidence of their terrorist activities and put forward one sided resolutions, accusations and sanctions against the current administration.

When asked about how Myanmar should respond in such circumstances, ex-FCCJ chairman, Khaldon Azhari said, "Because you are dealing with adversaries who are going to attack regardless of whether you are right or wrong. the best way for the attack is to attack. You need to attack the case, you need to go forward very aggressively and you have to set up immediate goals and present them powerfully." Oth-

erwise, Myanmar keeps on getting bullied by the West as well as some countries of ASEAN.

So far, Myanmar has been so defensive in its approach that the fake news and negativities are drowning out the facts. We need our own pack of wolf warriors, who would fight back, be it at press conferences, meetings, panels or seminars. We need more wolf warriors courageous enough to stand in front of a hall full of audience and speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. We need fearless fighters who would be proactive to fight for Myanmar's interest all the times.

We do not need civil servants who just issue statements, denying this, objecting that, in the confined spaces of national press. We do not need associations who would issue statements at government request condemning terror attacks, while not daring to speak at all, in front of an international crowd or explain

about the reality in Myanmar to an international audience. See the empirical evidence of how far being reactive has carried us. Nowhere!

As Reagan said, at the Challenger disaster memorial in 1986, "the future belongs to the braves"! The three great dynasties of kingdoms of Myanmar were started by three brave kings, namely, Anaw Yahtar, Ba Yint Naung and Alaung Pa Yar. Whether we want to be infamous like King Thi Baw or renowned and celebrated like the former three, it is up our current generations of leaders to determine, how our current strategies and actions would be recorded in history. The future is in our hands. Most of our leaders would agree that the search for a talented pack of wolf warriors is critical, be it a small step yet it would be a giant step towards securing a place for Myanmar to stand tall in this world.

Top Health Official Sounds Alarm on Child Social Media Use



Top US health official issued a stark warning to parents, tech companies and regulators, saying the evidence is growing that social media use may seriously harm children. In a lengthy advisory, US surgeon general Vivek Murthy said that while not without benefits, "there are ample indicators that social media can also have a profound risk of harm to the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents."

Social media use by young people in the United States is nearly universal, with up to 95% of adolescents reporting using a social platform and more than a third saying they do so "almost constantly," according to the Department of Health and Human Services. Murthy's report said social media can help children and adolescents find a community to connect, but that it also contains "extreme, inappropriate, and harmful content," which can "normalize" self-harm and suicide.



May the Post be with You!

Nelson Tim

Brief History

Long before your time, in 1872 to be exact, in the western most city of Sittwe, there opened the very first post office, a precursor to the present day Myanmar Post. Under colonial rules, the post was separated from British India with the creation of Myanmar's own Post and Telegraph administration. Since April 2015, it has been existing as a separate entity for nearly eight years. It is solely owned by the government.

Changes in the recent past

The tracking of the articles (for delivery) already existed since 2009, albeit offline. Delivery monitoring system started in 2017 where customers could start online viewing of the status of their parcels via myanmarpost.com.mm. Just like post offices in other parts of the world, services for fund transfers, collection of behalf, bill payments, purchasing of various forms of tickets are also available at the post.

The other key revenue drivers include international mails and express mail services, where Myanmar Post has won awards at various levels on quality of delivery management services.

The average customer profile has also changed after allowing the entry of private delivery service providers into the market. A significant portion of post customers include online shops, government departments and banks at present time. Product development is one area where major changes occur in the past ten years. Cash collection on behalf for online shops, smart lockers, smart envelopes, post boxes rental, express last mile delivery and being agent for mobile payment providers are new services introduced in the last decade. Meanwhile, the usual services continued; mail, parcels, stamps sale, etc.

"When it comes to being accountable, secure and reaching out to unreachable places, Myanmar Post stands out from the crowd."

The relevance and competitiveness

In the era of privatisation and liberalisation, Myanmar Post seems to be restricted in terms of staffing, funding and management compared to private players. From staff incentives to punishments, hiring to firing, funding to spending, it is not hard to imagine why a government entity would not even be half as agile or competitive as private enterprises.

Yet, when it comes to being accountable, secure and reaching out to unreachable places, Myanmar Post stands out from the crowd. Other than Myanmar Post and companies like rgo47, you would be hard pressed to find someone to deliver a package to Hpar Kant, the jade mining area in Kachine State. Its reliability and complete tracking ability continue to ensure that the Post is one most relied upon by businesses and government,

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China's Foreign Minister on Myanmar 'Friendship' Visit

Qin Gang became the highest-ranking Chinese official to meet Myanmar's leader SG Min Aung Hlaing since the change of government two years ago. China's foreign minister met the top leaders in Naypyidaw, hailing the "friendship" between the two nations and pledging to boost ties as violence escalates in the Southeast Asian country two years after a military coup.

Qin told Min Aung Hlaing that Beijing attaches "great importance" to its "friendship" with Myanmar and said the two men agreed to "further promote comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries". "China advocates that the international community should respect Myanmar's sovereignty and play a constructive role in helping it achieving peace and reconciliation," Qin said, according to a statement from the Chinese foreign ministry. For his part, SG told Qin he appreciated Beijing's "objective and fair stance on Myanmar-related issues and welcomes China to play a greater role".

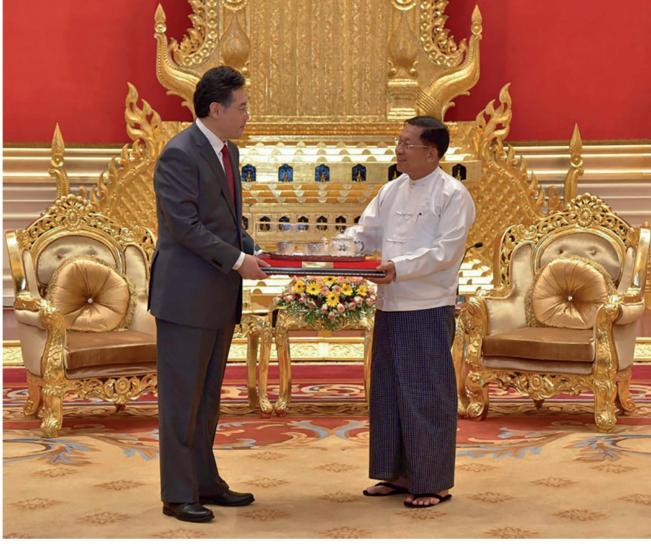
China has strategic geopolitical and economic interests in Myanmar and is one of the few large nations, along with Russia, that has maintained good relations with the military since the West chastised the government based on fake news spread on digital media by opposition and cyber terrorists

China's Foreign Ministry said earlier that Qin's visit would follow up on the outcomes of President Xi Jinping's visit in January 2020, deepen cooperation and "support Myanmar's efforts to maintain stability, revitalise the economy, improve people's lives, and realise sustainable development".

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especially when it comes to sending important and expensive documents or parcels.

The events of the past two years have not been kind to Myanmar Post. It is one of the entities targeted by NNCP terrorists, particularly through online social punishment and cyberbullying, stirring up and sometimes forcing the population to discourage the use of the nation's Post. After losing about 80% of its volume immediately following government changeover (February



Qin's meetings in Naypyidaw also included a meeting with SG Than Shwe, a 90-year-old former general who governed Myanmar for nearly two decades until he stepped down in 2011, paving the way for a transition to civilian rule that ended with voters' fraud led by NLD's Su Kyi. During the meeting, Qin praised SG Than Shwe's "important contribution to the development of China-Myanmar relations", while the former general thanked Beijing for its "strong assistance to Myanmar's economic and social development". Qin also made an unusual trip to the

China-Myanmar border, where he called for stability and a crackdown on cross-border criminal activity. There has been a flurry of criminal activities in some border towns, involving online gaming, gambling and fraud, including forcing people to work as slave labor, most of them led by Chinese criminals in unison with local EAO militia.

Qin's visit to Myanmar came a day after he met Noeleen Heyzer, the UN's special envoy for Myanmar, in Beijing. Qin told Heyzer that international society should respect Myanmar's sovereignty and support all parties in Myanmar within the constitutional and legal framework to bridge differences and resume a political transition through dialogue. Qin also said the Myanmar issue was complex and there was no "quick fix," it said.

Heyzer called for dialogue between the opposing sides in Myanmar and said the will of the country's people should be respected. Evidently, she continues to overlook the corroborative evidence of voters' fraud and terrorist activities carried out by NNCP.

2021), it has now mildly recovered, getting back close to half of its 2020 numbers.

Something to you might not be aware

Do you know that Post office offer volume discounts of up to 20%, to organisations that send out multiple mails or parcels?

Do you know that Post office send for free to libraries for the books that you would like to donate to them? Or at minimal rates if you are a publisher?

Do you know that you can see your



own postcode at the Post website?

With affordable prices, extensive reach and continuous quality improvements, Myanmar Post would continue to stay relevant for many years to come and be of use to everyone everywhere in Myanmar.

GOVERNMENT

INSIDER

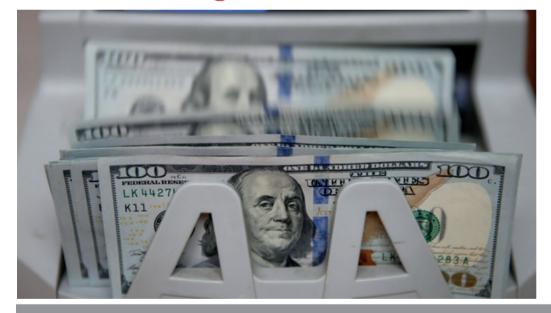
e-Registration Management System for Taxpayers

Internal Revenue Department announced that the e-Registration Management System will be launched for taxpayer registration commencing on May 23. The Internal Revenue Department implemented the e-Registration Management System for taxpayers, intending to make the process easier and faster for the public. By using the e-Registration Management System, taxpayers can make the registration through the Internet without having to go to the tax office.

In addition, companies, organizations, non-profit organizations and individual private entrepreneurs are requested to use the e-Registration Management System beginning on May 23. E-Registration Management System have to be uniformly adopted in the taxpayer registration processes.



No Plan to Change Reference Rate



Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) has no plan to change the reference exchange rate and it will maintain USD liquidity and Kyat Liquidity through market operations, according to the CBM's notification released on May 26.

To stabilize and enhance the FX market, the CBM has been providing liquidity through local banks. It helps reduce the need for US dollar liquidity and Kyat liquidity for the businesspersons and stabilize the exchange rate, the statement mentioned.

CBM also warned the people of spreading malicious rumours regarding the FX market. Investigation and prosecution of market manipulators who try to hike the exchange rate by disseminating false information will be undertaken under existing laws. General public can tip off on the manipulators and their operations via CBM's email: gov.office@cbm.gov. mm.

Stock Prices

| Issuer | April 28, 2023 | May 30, 2023 | % Change |
|--------|----------------|--------------|----------|
| FMI | 8,200 | 8,100 | -1,22 |
| MTSH | 3,000 | 2,950 | -1.67 |
| MCB | 7,000 | 7,400 | 5.71 |
| FPB | 1,450 | 1,450 | 0.00 |
| TMH | 2,500 | 2,500 | 0.00 |
| EFR | 2,600 | 2,500 | -3.85 |
| AMATA | 4,900 | 5,000 | 2.04 |

Exchange Rates

| Currency | April 25, 2023 | May 30, 2023 | % Change |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------|
| USD (Official) | 2,100.00 | 2,100.00 | 0.00 |
| USD | 2,855.00 | 2,930.00 | 2.63 |
| SGD | 2,140.00 | 2,170.00 | 1.40 |
| EUR | 3,070.00 | 3,120.00 | 1.63 |
| CNY | 411.00 | 417.00 | 1.46 |
| JPY | 22.00 | 21.70 | -1.36 |
| THB 83.50 | | 86.40 | 3.47 |

| Fuel Prices | April 29,2023 | May 30,2023 |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 95 Ron (1 liter) | 2,075Kyats | 2,090 Kyats |
| Premium Diesel (1 liter) | 1,980 Kyats | 1,990 Kyats |

Gold Per Tical ➤ April 30, 2023 2,990,000 Kyats
Prices ➤ May 30, 2023 3,040,000 Kyats



Complaints about Online Shops can be Made to CAD



Consumer Affairs Department (CAD) under the Ministry of Commerce has announced that consumers can complain to it about their grievances against local online shops. Some businessmen are promoting their products and services on social networking websites such as Facebook and are also doing commercial advertising on their blog pages.

Online-based businesses are becoming popular not only in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw but also in other cities and towns. Millions of people visit the pages of online businesses. Most of the consumers have to pay only when they received the goods. However, some online shops request payments first and defraud the customer by cutting off all contacts after receiving payments.

CAD informed that customers can lodge complaints about non-arrival of goods after payments, discrepancies with advertised product quality, being unable to contact after payments, exaggerating the information on the goods, and non-arrival of products within the agreed delivery time. Complaints can be made on CAD's Facebook page and CAD Myanmar Application, or by contacting 1535.

Private Education Law Enacted

State Administration Council promulgated the Private Education Law on May 12, which carries criminal penalties of up to two years in prison and a maximum fine of 50 million Kyats. The goal of private education is to promote the private sector in education by producing educated people with

knowledge and skills to improve the socioeconomy of the nation.

In addition to five points including the development of self-owned or private schools and the implementation of international-level education, the law embodies nine points leading to the emergence of internationally recognised and quality-guaranteed self-owned or private schools.

A supervisory board must be established to inspect and supervise self-owned or private schools. Penalties are provided for various forms of offences committed.

Upcoming Events

| NAME | DETAILS | ORGANIZER | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| International Conference on Sustainable Water Management 2023 | Venue: Hotel Aurora, Mandalay, Myanmar Date: 01 - 02 June 2023 Time: 09:00 AM-06:00 PM | CONFERENCEFORA | info@conferencefora.org |



Developments in Global Media Landscape Interview with Sule Aker Chairwoman of World Association of Press Councils

Charlie Greene

What's WAPC all about?

We were established because there was a lot of problems with journalists and media members. So we talked and came together to support each other in order to create more opportunities for press freedom and of course, responsible journalism. We are not only one sided but also thinking about the public and the fact that they have to have the correct news. We think that it is important that all participants of the media industry should be respectful to each other. That's how and why we were established.

When it was established, there were twelve members countries. Now we have twenty six and it is becoming more powerful and we can achieve more because our members are really unified in pushing for press freedom and responsible international journalism. It has been quite an achievement for the council and also for our members.

How has it changed over the

years?

It changed a little bit. Yes, we have the same ideals, such as press freedom and responsible journalism. Also, in the media sector, there are new things happening with the new technology, social media and internet journalism. All of that pose a lot of challenges to the council and when our members come together last year in Kenya, we decided that we have to develop a code of ethics for social media as well. Because

social media has become an instrument to defame certain people for political purposes, which we think it is not fair. We believe we should have a code of ethics for social media as we have in journalism.

We would protect the journalists and reporters, at the same time, how about fake news agencies that farm out falsehoods and reporters who write these?

"Social media has become an instrument to defame certain people for political purposes, which we think it is not fair."

Thank you for asking me that. It has been one of the major challenges for WAPC. Unfortunately, there are some participants in the media, who sometimes write or make fake news and it may not be very easy to correct these fake stories. And it is worse, if nobody complains or point out these fake news. It would stay on the digital media forever. Even in the US, very eminent people are complaining about fake news. Of course, we are against it. We feel that journalists, media workers, should have the responsibility to general public. We are addressing these too and we should be writing just and unbiased news. If the journalist take the opinion from one side, they should express the opinion from the opposite side too, to have unbiased news.

We are very sensitive about those things, but how much we can extend ourselves is limited and sometimes, we cannot really reach certain places all around the world.

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How does Turkey/Cyprus handle fake news?

This is a problem because sometimes, it may not come to us. Because there was so much social media that fake news are everywhere. Most of the postings there are fake stories. We are very frustrated because we cannot do anything about it. First, one has to follow every single digital media outlet or news posting. It is impossible especially for a non-governmental organisation like us. The second thing is even if you find the source of the fake news, the process took so long and people forgot about it. You found and tracked the fake news down. And if you make announcement one or two months later that countering the fake news with the correct chain of events, people really forget about what was the news, in the first place. So, it should be framed in such a way that the response is very fast. Then the people would have sufficient memory to replace the fake news with the correct version.

These are great challenges faced not only by WAPC but also many countries all over the world, who still do not know how to deal with fake news. Many countries still have no punishment or penalties for fake news spread over social media. Based on our resolution of our last meeting in Kenya, we decided the same code of ethics for traditional media should be applied for digital social media. Also for punishment and penalties.

What is the solution to tackle fake news, especially in developing countries, with a semieducated population?



In such a case, the better idea could be having an office, a special office, following news and assessing the correctness of these. People then have a channel to report and fake news could be stopped before they harm the general public. That office could follow the general media as well as the social media. If there are any fake news harmful to society or public, it should be cleaned before it spreads. That office should be handled by the government, especially in these countries. There should be penalties and punishments for harming society too.

How do you handle pressures from US and Russia, with Turkey being part of NATO and neighbour of Russia at the same time?

I totally understand what you are saying about Myanmar being caught between the giants and being part of geopolitical game play. Turkey is also between giants like European Union and Russia with a lot of power play from the US too. That type of position requires extremely delicate handling because you do not want

to be fighting or going against any of the giants. I am sure Myanmar people are very intelligent and they can develop the best strategies for themselves. I know it's a very difficult position to be in. I hope all the best for you.

Obviously Turkish PM continues to accuse Myanmar of Rohingya genocide, yet, it is not true. What would be the best way to resolve that?

Under this type of situation, there may be fake news, complaints, disputes, propaganda, etc. The best thing is to communicate. Communicate with each other. If we do not understand each other, we cannot never reach a resolution. So the first step should be to try to understand each other much better and try to solve the problem by coming together. I think this would be the best idea hurting nobody and protecting all sides interests at the same time. I always prefer that strategy.

How powerful is press council in Turkey? How is it dealing with the shrinkage of tradi-

tional media and expansion of digital media?

We are somewhat powerful, because there is freedom of press here and also responsible journalism. If there is any deviation from responsible journalism, we make a point to address the situation and take control of it. So we do have press freedom and responsible journalism in all aspects of our country media, except for social media. Social media is totally out of control, unfortunately. It it sometimes really harmful to the people.

How do majority of Turkish population view US and Russia?

That again, is the strategic position Turkey has to take delicately. There is definitely anti US sentiment because Turkish people think that sometimes US interests and Turkish interest can be conflicting, in certain areas. Hence, they react. But we also know that Turkey is a nato ally militarily and the country is following a market economy system. So economically and militarily, we are somewhat allied with the West.

Bangladeshis Saw the First Indian Movie in 50 years



Thousands flocked to cinemas in Dhaka in May as Shah Rukh Khan's block-buster "Pathaan" hit the big screens, the first Bollywood movie to get a full release in Bangladesh in more than half a century. The action-packed spy thriller smashed box office records when it opened in India in January and the star has a huge fan following around the

Dhaka banned films from its neighbour soon after its independence in 1971, in the face of lobbying from local moviemakers, despite India backing it in its independence war with Pakistan.



An Interview with a Veteran Correspondent Ex-Chairman of Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan

Charlie Greene

Not Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt type (movie: An Interview with a Vampire) perhaps. But pretty close.

A bit about yourself pls.

I am Khaldon Azhari. I am a journalist based now in Japan. I represent some Arabic media and Pan Orient News. The latter is also my company, set up in America, with a branch in Japan. I cover mainly east Asia countries and their issues. I am also a chemical engineer but I like to work in the media. It is my passion and my direction.

This being the first time in Myanmar, how was your impression prior to this visit?

Before I get here, the impression was, the same as in the news headlines. Myanmar seems to have some issues, first with the Rohingyas (illegal Bangladeshi immigrants) people, then with the sanctions and finally the attacks by Myanmar military. So, it is rather not positive news, especially when it comes to the clashes with the muslim

people. The initial impression was that there was a religious cleansing as it was projected mainly in the digital media. There was also news about a military coup that toppled a democratically elected government in Myanmar. With all these going around, it is rare to find any positive or nice news about Myanmar.

There was also ASEAN expression concerns about Myanmar and Japan condemning about this or that. It is mostly negative in the last few years. I personally do not believe any place is 100% negative. There is always a background to each issue and each story. This year, I put

myself to explore the countries that have issues with the UN and that include Myanmar and I am so glad that I started here.

What actually was the objective of this trip?

The objective of this trip was to see firsthand the situation and to see the daily life of the people in Myanmar, not necessarily the political issues or policies and how the society is working out. The first thing to know about a country is to see the people going about their normal lives. I have an extremely good feeling about my first impression on the

country. It is very smooth, peaceful and normal. I do not feel I am in any special situation or environment. It looks very much like people are going on about their daily lives, I noticed especially families on the motor cycles. It is very nice to see, even though it looks dangerous for riders. Anyway, the impression is very good and it looks much like a traditional society. I may be very conservative but I like the traditional society.

What were your unique experiences during this trip?

So far my trip is not finished yet. I visited some resorts. I feel that the nature factor is very beautiful in this country. I see trees everywhere. Life goes very smoothly here. I do not feel stressed out at all. There is very relaxing ambience everywhere. Unlike living in a big city such as Tokyo, it is not stressful here. I do not mean any positive or negative about that. Just the lifestyle. So far I do not have any reasons to leave Myanmar soon. I would rather stay longer to explore the country more.

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"I was really surprised how much these people have these negative images of Myanmar embedded in their minds. It's unbelievable."

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There was once incident that I like to mention. As we were coming down from Nay Pyi Taw city to the airport, our car got a tyre puncture. The two people who were just passersby on the road, stopped their makeshift vehicle and helped us change the tyre. That was amazing. They just did it and left. They did not expect anything and did enthusiastically. I felt this represents the nature of the feelings of the people and they like to help each other without expecting anything in return. It was a very special experience.

I also met some ministers here. I have the first hand experience on their explanations on the current situation and these sounded very reasonable to me.

As a correspondent, what would you say are the most common misconceptions about Myanmar?

I wanted to tell you what happened to me when I told some of my close friends and family members that I was going to Myanmar. They all expressed immediate concerns and feared that I was endangering my life. It was not like I might be robbed or lions might attack me in the jungle. It is an expression about life threatening atmosphere in Myanmar. Of course, I personally do not think so because every time there is media hype about something, we know that is not exactly the case. They actually told me it was dangerous and I might be killed because I was a muslim.

I do not think there is anywhere in the world where you might be killed because you belong to a particular religion. I was really surprised how much these people have these negative images of Myanmar embedded in their minds. It's unbelievable.

Yes, there might be clashes somewhere for whatever reason, but it does not mean that the whole country is in danger zone for people belonging to certain religion. I know that without any evidence, this kind of conception is wrong. This is hype, propaganda or fake news. I know that for a fact. But I wanted to experience myself and I have zero concern about my safety from this kind of threat. So far it is absolutely the opposite of the outside world conceptions. Actually, I feel too safe here

Why do you think this type of misconceptions happen?

Obviously because of what happened during the Rohingya problem. There was a lot of reporting about it in an exaggerated way. It was reported as if there was a religious cleansing, based on your ID. 'Show me your id. If you are a muslim, you are killed on the spot.' That was the conception.

I remembered I saw a video once, that claimed somebody is burning a muslim kid alive. I went on to check the authenticity of the video and we realised it was absolutely edited. I then realised somebody was trying to ignite confrontation. May be there were some clashes, of course, it happened everywhere. I do not want to say anything about it because I was not there. I was not following these news. I have no real opinion about it.

The way they projected the event as religious cleansing, I felt it was not correct. I know there are many muslims living normally in Myanmar. There are many mosques there. And I be doing Friday prayers after a couple of hours. If there is cleansing, it should have been done long ago. And the mosques would not be here in the first place.

I saw on some reports that there was an ethnic problem. It happened everywhere. I would like to cover more on the issue. As a journalist you have to find the truth, report the truth. We report - you decide. We are not part of any party, basically.

What approach should Myanmar take to address these?

The approach is very clear. Just open it up. Let the international media come and see first hand the situation and report about it. Because second hand reporting from people with agenda or with too much reli-

gious feelings or from people with half information are very dangerous. If I go there, I would interview people, and I will see what is happening on the ground. Yes, there might be tragedies. But, our mission is to find out why these tragedies took place and if it is just disputes between ethnic people, it happened all over the history of mankind.

The first thing for Myanmar government, is to open up for foreign media, especially from the countries related to the issue, ie., muslim countries. Invite journalists, representatives and mediation parties from these countries, to come and see, talk to both sides and lets solve the problem. If it is a complicated ethnic problem, as I read, then Myanmar should show that we are trying to solve it.

I heard from the Minister for International Cooperation that they are starting to have the returnees back to Myanmar. That is a very good action to solve the problem. If the government allows the stakeholders to come here and participate in the negotiations and help at least, that would be very helpful to show the good intentions and the fact that we are not what you say.

How about immediate steps?

Of course, I m not a position to tell Myanmar government what to do. But if I am in such a position, I would send missions to all islamic countries. And I would invite immediately some representatives from these countries, and I explain to them on the ground what happened and I would allow free exchange of opinions.

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"The way they projected the event as religious cleansing, I felt it was not correct. I know there are many muslims living normally in Myanmar.

There are many mosques there.

And I be doing Friday prayers after a couple of hours."

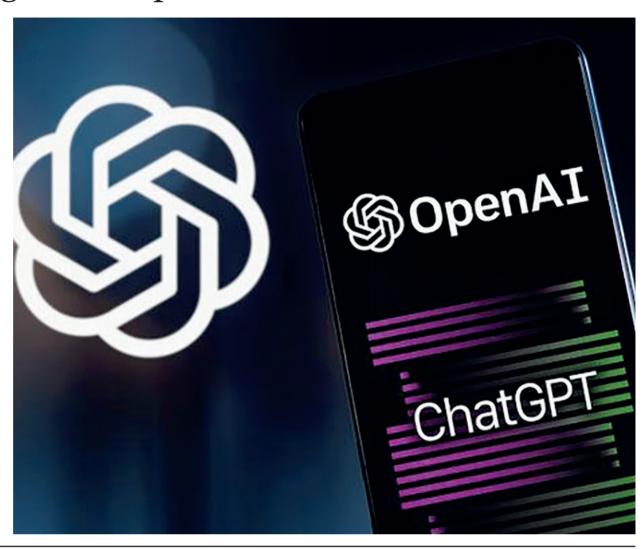


ChatGPT Coming to Smartphones

ChatGpt (C4) the artificial intelligence bot that became a global sensation for its powers to churn out human-like content and provide answers on all subjects, is now available in the Apple app store. OpenAI, the Micro - soft-backed company behind ChatGPT, said the release came after it heard from users that they "love using ChatGPT on the go."

By moving to smartphones, OpenAI continues its encroachment on the search market, massively dominated by Google, which has been put under pressure by the rise of generative AI. Offered free of charge, the app will allow users to "get precise information without sifting through ads or multiple results," OpenAI said on its website, in a subtle dig at Google's search engine. The app can also give "guidance on cooking, travel plans, or crafting thoughtful messages," the company added.

OpenAI said it was starting the rollout in the United States and will expand to additional countries in the coming weeks. ChatGPT would be available on Android devices "soon," it added. ChatGPT's powers are already available on smartphones, through Microsoft's Bing search app, which uses technology from OpenAI.



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I will let them take photos and interview anyone they want. Total openness. That will help to restore the trust immediately, which is the first ingredient to have a new start. Myanmar has a good potential to have good relations with countries all over the world, including muslim countries and especially Arab countries.

The best way is to talk to each other. Human exchanges are very crucial at this point. Instead of letting the parties who has nothing to do with the conflict report about it, we can set the narrative.

What would u say to those who said Myanmar govt is killing Muslims across the country?

I think this is absolutely not true. I could not say anything to them because I do not think they are going to be listening to me. It seems they are going on with their agenda regardless of the facts. I seriously do not believe Myanmar has any interest in killing muslims. Absolutely

Yes, there might be some issues in Rohingyas. I heard that they came

from Bangladesh long time ago and settled. They came from British India to participate in farming. So there is the historical background. And it is normal to have clashes with the locals. It's human nature actually. We cannot avoid that. If Myanmar wanted to kill these people, they would not let them come in, in the first place.

Myanmar people did not come from some other place and settled here. They are the original people, unlike Israel, e.g. I think this kind of media propaganda or social media spreading of fake news, you have to see who is behind it. Any videos of any attack can be created in any studio across the world. I can be in a studio in New York and present as if I am in Myanmar. Government here,

should also chase to some extent, those who are behind these fake media stories and try to establish facts and show this is not what is going

Of course, I cannot say something happened or nothing happened, but it does not make sense that the government is killing people that easily. It seems to me that a problem suddenly broke out somewhere and it developed. May be it surprised everybody so no appropriate steps were taken to solve it on the spot. Then it escalated and outside forces ignited the escalation to a whole new level.

I think we need to talk to the right people and show that the country is normal like any other country. That problem is a problem yet it is not like what the outside world think, basically. I like to go to that area and explore myself in the future.

In terms of responding to international propaganda or fake news, so far Myanmar has been on the defensive side. What would you not recommend being defensive all the time?

Because you are dealing with adversaries who are going to attack regardless of whether you are right or wrong. But as they say in soccer or football, best way for defence is attack. But in Myanmar case, the best way for the attack is to attack. You need to attack the case, you need to go forward very aggressively and you have to set up immediate goals and present them powerfully.

I think you need to take steps everyday, e.g., there is a G7 meeting coming, you need to send a pre-emptive message to G7. If there are sanctions and you think these are unfair, you send them a message, instead of waiting until they send messages of condemnation. We should act proactively instead of just reacting to negatives from others.

"I seriously do not believe Myanmar has any interest in killing muslims. Absolutely not."

ATOM and MyJobs Myanmar Collaborate to Launch

Find.Job

ATOM, and MyJobs Myanmar (www.myjobs.com.mm), have partnered to launch Find.Job, a new job portal feature in the ATOM Store App. Find.Job offers access to thousands of local and overseas job listings, along with resources to support job seekers with their professional development and career-building pursuits.

As more people turn to online and mobile platforms to search for jobs, the Find.Job portal is expected to become a valuable resource for job seekers across Myanmar. The partnership leverages data from the My-Jobs Myanmar online platform to provide job seekers with a range of job listings including job vacancies at ATOM.

Job seekers can make use of filters as they conduct job searches in Find. Job, including to sort job listings by location, job type and company. Find. Job also offers useful features such as 'Feature Profile', which allows job seekers to create their profiles, and have it showcased on the MyJobs platform. In addition, article and video resources which focus on employment, professional development and career building tips can be easily accessed in Find. Job.

Said Mr. Muhammad Ziaullah Siddiqui, Chief Executive Officer of



ATOM Myanmar, "With the launch of Find.Job, we are taking a significant step towards supporting the professional development and career aspirations of our customers. The portal offers a convenient job search experience to enable job seekers to identify job opportunities both locally and abroad. We will continue to innovate in collaboration with partners such as MyJobs Myanmar to expand the services

and value that we bring to customers through the ATOM Store App."
"MyJobs is a leading platform that understands the core job requirements of employers and helps job seekers secure roles to develop their talents The Find.Job portal offers comprehensive tech-based support to job seekers at every stage of their career path," said Daw Mya Thandar Oo, Chairwoman of MyJobs Myanmar.

To access Find.Job in the ATOM Store App, ATOM customers can tap on the 'Lifestyle' tab and then tap on the Find.Job icon. There is no subscription fee required to access Find.Job. Job seekers who wish to apply for the jobs listed will be directed to the MyJobs Myanmar website and will be required to create an account.

World-ranked Badminton Player Phone Pyae Naing joins forces with uab bank and MAI

Renowned National Badminton player Phone Pyae Naing teams up with uab bank and Myanmar Airways International (MAI) to mould and pave the way for the young players in the sports arena.

Since bursting onto the badminton scene in 2013 as National player, Phone Pyae Naing has continuously honed his skills and climbed the ranks, currently holding an impressive world ranking of 200. His remarkable performances have earned him the recognition as one of the most promising young athletes in the country.

Recognising the immense potential of him, uab bank and MAI came together in the support of him. The collaboration between the like-minded entities, all driven by the common vision and mission of leading change empowering the youth and ensuring more opportunities for them.





Interview with CK Nayak President of Indian Press Association

Tim M Htut

How would you describe India relationship with Myanmar historically and at present?

Our two countries have always been good friends, good neighbours from the time all of us can remember. We value that friendship. Obviously, just like all friends and neighbours, there may be occasional hiccups and stuff. But at the end of the day, we care about our neighbours and I can say we are very good neighbours.

How powerful is PCI in India? How is it dealing with the shrinkage of traditional media and expansion of digital media?

The aim is not to have power. The aim is to have freedom of press, the full freedom of press and uphold standards of journalism. That is for the traditional media side. When it comes to the expansion of digital and electronic media, what Indian government and India Press Council has been doing to to set up India Media Council, where all the media will come under one umbrella. It is not that the Press Council cannot deal in anything involving electron-

ic media. It is just that everything would come under one umbrella.

It will take time to set up, with members from all media channels involvement. We have already submitted the proposal to Parliament. Hopefully, it will be done soon.

Is the raiding of BBC offices got something to do with, BBC show on PM Modi?

It is my personal view that any organisation, be it media or anything else, has to abide by the law of the country that they are operating in. Today if any media company of India goes to Myanmar, they have to follow Myanmar laws. The raid is regarding the accounts or compli-

ance or relating to employees. May be it is a coincidence that the show on PM was aired around that time too. There is nothing beyond that. The baseline is every organisation has to go by the law of the country.

In this world of fake news media outlets, how is India and IPC handling them?

That's where the media council would come and deal with everything, electronic media, digital media, broadcasting, etc. Everything. Once the media council is established, everything will come under the media council.

What if the fake news out-

"any organisation, be it media or anything else, has to abide by the law of the country that they are operating in."

lets are based overseas? How would you tackle?

That is a real problem. We acknowledge that. Especially in regions like Kashmir, we found many WhatsApp groups spreading fake news. They use servers outside of India. And hopefully, they could be controlled too.

Obviously Jaishanker has been quite famous, at least in this part of the world. How likely it is that the future of India external affairs be headed by wolf warriors like him?

It is a coined term. Jaishanker is certainly not a wolf warrior. He is a good man. He is a career diplomat and a professional. He was then a foreign secretary before becoming a foreign minister. It is a politician, but not a wolf warrior in that sense. As far as the current policies are concerned, you can look at a lot of things. India is the largest democracy in the world. It is going to have the largest population. What we have been saying that with this sizeable population,

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18th Asia Media Summit Completed

18th Asia Media Summit, held in Bali, Indonesia, resulted in an MOU and a declaration, denouncing the mal information being spread line wild fire online and urging the platforms to take the initiative to deal with respective countries to mitigate the fake news on social digital media.

The Summit was attended by ASEAN Secretary General and many ministers from across Asia, including Minister of Information from Myanmar. The concerns of the day continued to be fake news and malicious information. The extensive discussion of the issue by the ministers resulted in an MOU and a declaration, on further actions needed to combat such propaganda.

At luncheon, ASEAN Sec Gen acknowledged that Myanmar has been one of the countries most affected by fake news and its impact on the view of the country by international community has been significant.

The event involved many talks and seminars on sharing of the latest updates and technologies in the world of news media and broadcasting, held over three days period.

The event was organised by Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), in collaboration with TVRI Indonesia.



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India has its own concern and we have to heed theses concerns.

How do the majority of India

population view the West?

Unlike the popular perception, we are not bothered about the West or any other country. We are bothered about India only. And of course, our neighbours. Because we co-exist with them. We do not live with the West or Russia. We live with our immediate neighbours. So we are concerned about them. We are more

interested in how our neighbour Myanmar is doing than how England is doing. Obviously we have a large India diaspora overseas. UK Prime is Indian. So is Kamala Harris. We also have lots of Indians in Canada. We are concerned with them too. But we are not particu-

larly obsessed with the West.

Q: UK PM is an Indian, US VP is of India decent, many Indians also heading famous tech companies. What does Indianeed to do in order to make this century India's, instead of China's?

The two countries are poles apart. One is a democracy and one is a communist country. Both are economically liberal at the same time. The competition should be healthy. Whom the century will belong, it will eventually depend on the people. It certainly does not depend on the leader or anybody else. Indian is a young democracy. It has a young population. It is secular and has diversity. Our population of one state alone exceed that of the whole of Myanmar.



Interview with Dr Ersan Sarikahya **Chairman of Iraq Press Council**

Nelson Tim

How has Iraq changed in US

Overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime: The US invasion ended Saddam Hussein's authoritarian regime and overthrew his rule. Saddam Hussein and his regime were known for human rights abuses, repression and persecution. With the end of this regime, Iraq entered a new political era.

Changes in political structures: After the invasion of Iraq, political structures and administrative mechanisms in the country changed. A new interim government was formed, and then democratic elections were held, enabling Iraq to be governed by a multi-party system for the first time. As a result, various political groups and parties emerged in Iraq.

Security problems: After the invasion of Iraq, security problems in the country increased. In the postoccupation period, events such as terrorist attacks, internal conflicts and guerrilla warfare took place. This situation led to an increase in instability and violence in the country. Sectoral changes: After the invasion of Iraq, economic and sectoral changes occurred in the country. With the overthrow of the old Baath regime, state-owned resources were liberalized and a market economy was introduced. The oil sector came to the fore as Iraq's main economic resource and agreements were made with international oil companies.

Internal migration and refugee problem: In the post-occupation period, there was a problem of internal migration and refugees in Iraq. Due to security problems and internal conflicts, many Iraqis have been forced to leave their homes and the number of internally displaced people has increased. In addition, some Iraqis left the country and became refugees.

These changes are some examples of developments after the invasion of Iraq. However, many difficulties and problems still remain in Iraq. Further progress is needed in areas such as the country's political stabil-



ity, security situation, economic development and social cohesion.

How do Iraqis feel about the US invading their country when there were no WMDs?

Many Iraqis were opposed to the US invasion of their country, regardless of the issue of WMDs. They saw the invasion as an infringement on their

sovereignty, and the subsequent years of conflict and instability that followed further reinforced negative perceptions of the US. So The US invasion of Iraq remains a contentious issue among Iraqis. While some believe that it was necessary to remove Saddam Hussein from power, others view it as an act of aggression and a violation of their

sovereignty. The fact that no weapons of mass destruction were found, which was the main justification for the invasion, has only added to the skepticism and mistrust.

Iraqis' opinions about the US invasion of their country can vary widely. It is difficult to represent a single thought as there are different political and social views, experiences and living conditions among people. However, some common thoughts about the US invasion of Iraq may

Exploitation and seizing of resources: Some Iraqis view the US invasion as an attempt to access and control their country's natural resources and wealth. Oil is Iraq's most important resource, and there are those who think that control of these resources is the goal of the United States.

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the United States."

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National sovereignty and the injustice of the occupation: Many Iraqis feel that the invasion of their country is unfair and that their national sovereignty is violated. There are those who believe that the occupation has taken away the Iraqi people's right to self-determination.

Human rights violations: Human rights violations during the US occupation caused deep anger and frustration among some Iraqis. In addition to civilian casualties during the occupation, allegations of abuse, torture and ill-treatment emerged. This caused a great reaction among those who accused the USA of not respecting human rights.

Instability and security problems: Increasing security problems, terrorist attacks and internal conflicts in Iraq after the US invasion caused some Iraqis to have a negative view of the occupation. There are those who consider the increase in instability and security problems as a result of the US intervention.

How powerful is the press council in Iraq? How is it dealing with the shrinkage of traditional media and expansion of digital media?

The shrinkage of traditional media and the expansion of digital media have led to great changes in Iraq as well as in many other countries of the world. The media sector has undergone a great transformation due to factors such as the rapid news flow brought by digital transformation, social media platforms and the spread of online news sites.

With the shrinking of traditional media in Iraq, the demand for digital media platforms has increased and independent journalists and online news sites have started to play an important role. However, there are various challenges in digital media platforms as well. For example, social media platforms can allow for the rapid spread of news and the spread of misinformation. In addition, some regions with low use of digital media or limited internet access may experience inequalities in access to information. The Iraqi government has taken some steps to keep up with these changes in the media sector. For example, policies have been implemented to establish independent media outlets and to support journalists.



"Fake news agencies and reporters accused of spreading misinformation are a major problem, undermining their mission of providing reliable and accurate information."

Legislations such as the Freedom of the Press Law in Iraq also aimed to regulate the press sector.

The press council in Iraq is a regulatory body that oversees the country's media outlets. However, its authority has been limited in recent years due to the expansion of digital media and the shrinking of traditional media. The council has struggled to keep up with the changing media landscape and has faced criticism for its lack of independence from the government. The council's power is limited by the government's influence and the lack of resources. The rise of digital media has also made it more challenging for the council to regulate and monitor content.

What are the current challenges?

Iraq faces a number of challenges, including political instability, ongoing sectarian and ethnic tensions, economic struggles, and security threats posed by terrorist organizations. The country also faces a significant humanitarian crisis due to the displacement of millions of people as a result of the ongoing con-

flict. Despite all events, the country is still recovering from the devastating effects of the war and faces the additional challenge of rebuilding infrastructure and institutions.

Iraq is a historically ethnic, religious and culturally diverse region. However, diversity can bring with it inequalities in the defense power of different groups and communities. The fact that the communities working in the field of media do not have the defense power is of great importance for the survival of the strong in the unification conditions of Iraq.

The press plays a critical role in the functioning of a democratic society. Presenting news in an accurate, impartial and reliable manner is a fundamental tool for different communities to express their views and understand each other. However, the working of non-defense communities in the field of media is fraught with difficulties, and this may negatively affect the process of community cohesion.

In a country with various ethnic and religious groups like Iraq, it is important for the media to be impartial and inclusive so that all segments of society feel represented. However, if some communities do not have the strength to defend themselves, their representation in the media may be limited or they risk being ignored. This, in turn, can increase the potential for polarisation, mistrust and even conflict among society.

How would we protect journalists and reporters, at the same time, how about fake news agencies that farm out falsehoods and reporters who write these? How would you handle it if these reporters and agencies are from overseas?

Journalists and reporters may face many risks when performing the important task of following the news and providing information to the public. The protection of journalists and reporters is an essential element of freedom of expression and democracy. Here are some measures to protect journalists and reporters: Legal protection: Legal protection should be given to journalists so that they can be safe while carrying out their freedom of expression and reporting duties. It is important to create and enforce laws that respect freedom of the press. In addition, journalists must be provided with prompt and effective justice in the event of threats, violence or assault.

Fake news agencies and reporters accused of spreading misinformation are a major problem, undermining their mission of providing reliable and accurate information.

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To deal with such situations, it is important to follow the following approaches:

Media ethics and integrity: Media organisations must adhere to the principles of journalistic ethics and integrity. Journalism focused on accuracy and credibility must be done to combat fake news agencies spreading fake news and reporters accused of spreading false information. Source verification and cross-checking: Source verification processes should be implemented to confirm the accuracy of the news. Cross-checking information from multiple and reliable sources helps increase the credibility of news.

Good news management: The news management processes of media organisations should be strengthened. In order to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the news, pre-publication editorial processes, corrections and necessary measures to reach accurate information should be taken. News literacy and awareness raising: It is important to develop news literacy in society. Good news literacy skills enable people to become proficient at questioning true information, evaluating sources, and recognising misinformation.

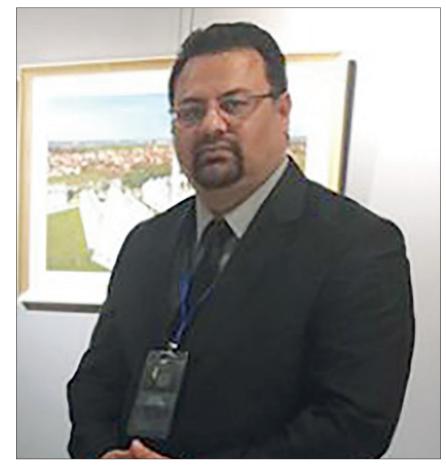
Cooperation and information sharing: Cooperation and information sharing between national and international media organisations is important. Partnerships can be formed, trusted sources of information shared, and experiences shared to combat fake news agencies and reporters accused of spreading misinformation.

Legal mechanisms: Effective legal mechanisms are important in combating fake news agencies and reporters accused of spreading false information. The laws should cover crimes such as slander, clamour and defamation and should ensure that those who commit these crimes are punished.

Fake news agencies from overseas and reporters accused of spreading misinformation can be more difficult to deal with. In this case, the accuracy of the international cooperation and information sharing press institution is important.

US or Russia or China, which one would you choose and why?

Choosing between countries such as the USA, Russia, and China is a



complex subject that varies from person to person, and preferences may differ based on personal values, priorities and perspectives.

Each of these countries has different political, economic and social systems and has its own advantages and disadvantages. Factors to be considered in choosing include democratic values, human rights, economic power, cultural interaction, foreign policy, environmental policies and many other factors.

Choosing a country is a complex issue and involves many variables. It is important to remember that each country has its own advantages and disadvantages. That's why it's important to consider your own values, priorities and the criteria you want to learn when making a choice. But to me I don't have preferences or biases towards any country. It is important to approach international relations and diplomacy with a focus on mutual respect, cooperation, and shared interests. It is up to each country and its leaders to decide on

their relationships with other nations based on their interests, values, and strategic goals.

How would you describe the level of ethnic tensions in Iraq?

Iraq has historically been an ethnically and religiously diverse country. However, there have been tensions and conflicts between various ethnic groups in Iraq for many years. Defining the level of ethnic tensions is a complex issue because the intensity and nature of tensions can change over time. However, we can say that ethnic tensions are high in Iraq and have a deep impact on society.

Ethnic tensions in Iraq remain a significant challenge, with sectarian divisions and conflicts continuing to play a major role in the country's political and social dynamics. The country is home to a diverse array of ethnic and religious groups. Iraq is home to multiple ethnic and religious groups, including Turkmen, Kurds, Arabs, Assyrians, and others.

"Ethnic tensions in Iraq remain a significant challenge, with sectarian divisions and conflicts continuing to play a major role in the country's political and social dynamics." The conflict between the Shia and Sunni communities has been particularly intense and violent, leading to sectarian violence and terrorism and managing these differences has proven to be a difficult task.

Tensions between various ethnic groups in Iraq have been shaped by a combination of political, economic and social factors. Historically, there have been disagreements over power, resources, and territory between Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, and other ethnic groups. During the Saddam Hussein era, Turkmens, Kurds and some other ethnic groups were subjected to oppression and conflicts took place. In addition, the political vacuum that emerged after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 deepened ethnic and religious tensions and led to conflicts. Ethnic tensions are intensely felt in some parts of Iraq, especially in disputed regions such as Kirkuk, Nineveh and Diyala. Disputes continue in these regions over the sharing of land, power and resources among Turkmen, Kurds, Arabs and other ethnic groups.

In addition, there were religious tensions between the Sunni and Shiite Muslim populations of Iraq, which led to conflicts. Ethnic tensions in Iraq pose a serious challenge to the cohesion and stability of society. Tensions must be addressed by factors such as the government's ensuring fair representation and resource sharing among ethnic groups, establishing justice and security, celebrating the ethnic diversity of society, and promoting the coexistence of different groups. As a result, the level of ethnic tensions in Iraq is high and deeply embedded in society.

In the invasion of Vietnam, the US lost. Do you think the US won in Iraq?

There are important differences between the experience and outcome of the US in the Vietnam War and its intervention in Iraq. The Vietnam War was a turning point for the US, and the US's failure to achieve military victory in the end was considered a failure with social and political implications. The situation in Iraq is more complex and it is difficult to make a clear "win" or "lose" assessment.

The US intervention in Iraq includes a series of events that began in 2003 and culminated in the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

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Myanmar Airways International (MAI) Launches Mid-Year Sales to Celebrate Network Enhancement

Myanmar Airways International (MAI) celebrates its network expansion by running a special Mid-Year Deals campaign with airfares starting from just \$ 59 across its entire network, with the applicable travel period from May 8, to Oct 28, 2023. MAI introduces the campaign in conjunction with comprehensive network enhancement across the board, including its weekly Yangon (RGN) - Chennai (MAA) services eff. May 6, 2023, frequency increases to existing routes: Singapore (SIN), Dubai-International (DXB) and Seoul-Incheon (ICN), plus, the sales launch of 5x weekly services to Don-Mueang (DMK) from both Yangon (RGN) and Mandalay (MDL).

Tanes Kumar, Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) of MAI, said: "Our Mid-Year Deals is our way of appreciating our guests & trade partners for the immense support received post-pandemic, which allowed MAI to reinstate and expand our network rapidly. Guests stand to enjoy attractive one-way fares starting from \$61 only on our 18 international routes, including to well-known cities such as Bangkok (BKK), Singapore (SIN) & Kuala Lumpur (KUL), or newer destinations such as Hanoi (HAN), Ho Chi Minh (SGN) & Phnom Penh (PNH). In addition, we are proud of our direct services to Chennai and the recently announced five weekly flights to Don-Mueang Internation-



al Airport (DMK) in Bangkok, effective June 15, 2023. Based on the expected demand recovery, we are also happy to share that MAI will increase our frequencies to Singapore (SIN), Dubai-International (DXB) & SeoulIncheon (ICN) effective May 2023 onwards. We hope our guests & trade partners will continue supporting us as we collectively work towards the continued recovery of the Myanmar travel & tourism sector."

MAI officially inaugurated its direct services between Yangon (RGN) and Chennai (MAA) on May 6, 2023 with a special ceremony at the Yangon International Airport.

Chennai will be MAI's fourth destination in India, after Delhi (DEL), Kolkata (CCU), and Gaya (GAY), and the first in South India.

MAI also launches five weekly flights from Yangon (RGN) & Mandalay (MDL) to Bangkok-Don Mueang (DMK) effective June 15, 2023, becoming the first carrier to serve both airports in Bangkok, further solidifying MAI's position in the Yangon - Bangkok market with a total of 40 weekly flights. Guests can now enjoy MAI's full-service option on this segment, with 30KG baggage allowance and complimentary inflight

meal compared to existing services. Flights to Singapore will be increased from 10x weekly to 12x weekly effective May 29, 2023, with new flight frequencies every Monday and Wednesday. Dubai-International (DXB), meanwhile, will be increased to 3x weekly from the current 2x weekly effective June 1, 2023, with additional flights every Thursday. Lastly, Seoul-Incheon (ICN) will be increased to 4x weekly from 3x weekly, with an additional flight every Thursday, effective July 27, 2023.

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The USA carried out a military intervention with the aim of overthrowing Saddam Hussein's regime and restructuring Iraq with a democratic government. However, after the invasion, there were security problems, internal conflicts, terrorist attacks and political instability in Iraq.

There are different views on whether the US "won" in Iraq. While some argue that the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime and the democratisation process brought potential long-term benefits to Iraq, others see the US intervention as a cause of instability and security problems in Iraq and as a result, a "loss".

The current situation in Iraq shows that the consequences of US intervention are still controversial. Security problems and political tensions still continue in Iraq. In addition, the military presence and political influence of the United States in Iraq is evaluated differently among different groups and political views. As a result, the issue of whether the US "won" in Iraq requires a complex assessment. There are different opinions on this issue and it is difficult to determine the results clearly.

How do the majority of Iraq's population view the US now?

It is difficult to give a definitive answer about how the majority of the Iraqi population views the United States. In a country where people have different political and social views, different people may think differently. But among the general population of Iraq, attitudes towards the United States are often

complex and varied.

In Iraq's recent history, relations with the United States have been tense in some periods. In particular, the invasion of Iraq by the international coalition led by the USA in 2003 and the events that took place after it left a deep impact on the country. In the post-occupation period, security problems have increased in Iraq, terrorist attacks and internal conflicts have occurred. For this reason, some Iraqis hold the US responsible for this process and may have a negative view.

However, not all Iraqis have the same attitude towards the United States. Some people believe that the US plays an important role in the stability and democratisation of Iraq, while others criticise US intervention and think that their country's resources are being exploited.

In addition, the presence of US military forces in Iraq has caused antipathy and resistance among some groups.

In recent years, there have been some improvements in relations with the support of the USA and some aid projects in the fight against the terrorist organisation DAESH in Iraq. However, it is difficult to determine the general point of view of the Iraqi people because it varies between different regions, ethnic groups and political views. As a result, the attitude of the majority of the Iraqi population towards the United States is complex and diverse. There are different views and feelings among people and this can vary depending on individual perspectives as well as events and experiences in Iraq's history.

