

Excursion: Downtown and Urban Fringe of Megacity Yangon

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According to an UN report, the percentage of urban population is increasing from 29.8% in 1950 to 47.2% in 2000. The projection shows that it will increase up to 60.2% in 2030 (Kraas 2005: 31). The fastest rate of increase in urban population is found in cities of developing countries, especially in Asia (UN 2002).

Through the publication of "Our Common future" by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987, the term 'sustainable development', meaning "meeting the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need", has increasingly applied. Although it is quite vague in meaning, the term has no real drawback because the powerful idea underlying this concept is that of intergenerational equity. Later this became a central aim in any development aspect which also extended to urban areas as 'sustainable cities' or 'urban sustainability'. As the actual achievement for sustainable development will be specific to local conditions and possibilities, such focus on urban areas is most desirable because the world's urban population is increasing especially in cities of developing countries.

The accepted population figure for defining a 'megacity' varies from between 5 million and 8 million, between 8 and 10, to 10 million and above. According to this, there are 39, 24 and 16 megacities in the world at present, and two thirds of the megacities are now in developing countries, mostly concentrated in South and East Asia. Thus, it is appropriate to emphasize sustainable development in these megacities, especially in developing countries.

Yangon with a population of more than five million in 2005 is a large social structure which passed through a long history to its present spatial and economic structure, producing its own unique urban functions and processes. Against this background, a two-day-field excursion after the workshop was made with the aim to understand the processes and pattern of the Megacity Yangon, to enhance the adaptive strategy in urban planning towards sustainable urban development of Yangon as it has the highest potential to become a unique city in Southeast Asia and to point out this reality. Figure 1 shows the excursion points that were visited on two days.

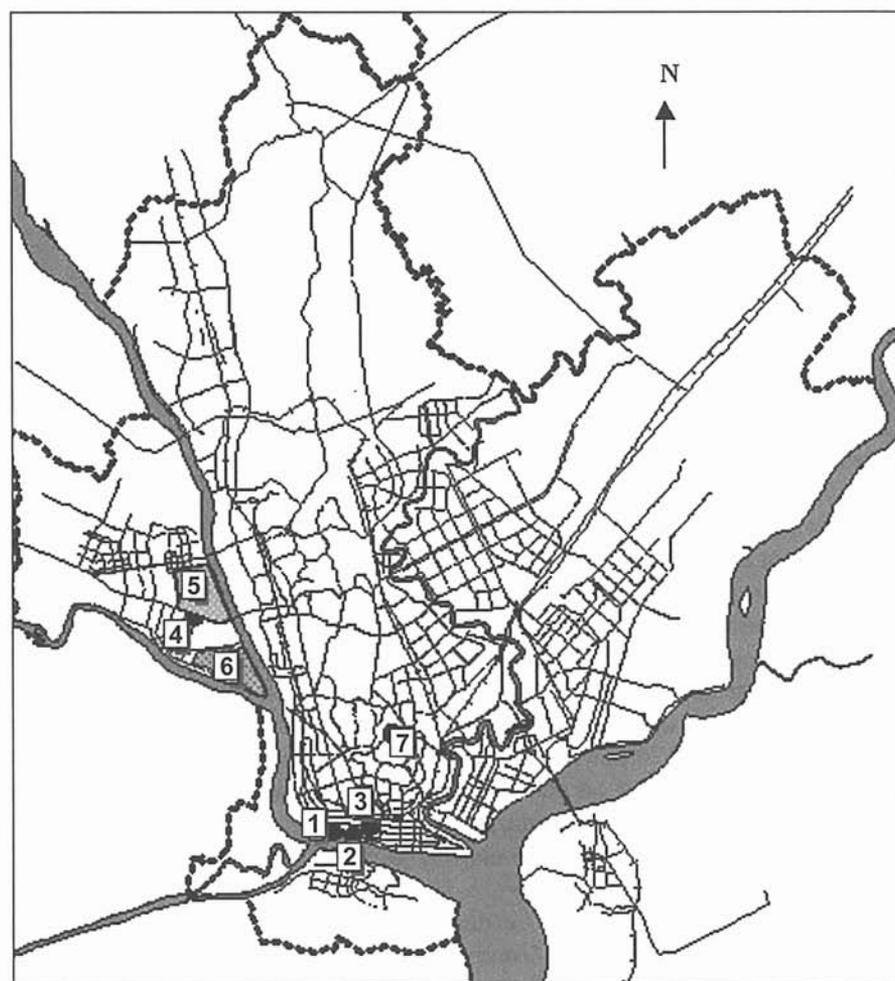


Fig. 1: Distribution of Chinese shophouses within Downtown Yangon
 1: Starting point at Yangon Harbour, 2: Chinese Temple, 3: Theingyi Market,
 4: Hlaingthayar Industrial Zone Management Office, 5: FMI Garden City,
 6: Pun Hlaing Golf Estate, 7: Chaukhtatgyi Pagoda

Day 1: Downtown of Yangon City: A unique urban heritage

(Conducted by Daw Hlaing Maw Oo and Daw Moe Moe Hlaing Myint of DHSHD on 23 June 2005).

Yangon City is the result of interrelationships between its society, defined by a particular cultural, economic and political structure and its physical landscape. The aggregates of all these various facets can be found throughout Yangon City,

creating their own functions and processes which create its own uniqueness, which in turn need to be considered in a sustainability context. The immediate need for this is to identify and select a proper way to utilize the strength of such diversity and uniqueness. On this background, the first day excursion was focused on the downtown area of Yangon to understand its uniqueness.

The Yangon Harbour: Origin of the Megacity Yangon

The day started with the old harbour. The main purpose of choosing this harbour is to show the original starting point of Yangon as a small fishing village and how it evolved to present stage, and to show how an old port was still functioning with its old structure. Most important is to point out the fact that this area should be considered as an urban heritage place of Yangon City.

Yangon was known as a small fishing village called 'Dagon' under the Mon regime until mid 18th century. In May 1755 a mark in the history of Yangon was made by King Alaungphaya, who occupied the whole lower Myanmar and changed this small village into a port town. Its value as a port started with three wooden jetties. The largest was the King's wharf, which was at the place of the present Pansodan jetty. There were two large wooden buildings used as store-houses nearby this jetty.

The first Anglo-Myanmar War broke out in 1824 and British occupied the Tanintharyi and Rakhine coastal areas. After this war, heavy taxes were levied on Yangon port due to war indemnity. Thus, immediately after this war, trade and commerce shifted to British owned ports because they were tax free. As such, *Mawlamying* became a principal port at that time.

The second Anglo-Myanmar war broke out in 1852 and the British occupied lower Myanmar, and Yangon came under British rule. Since then, Yangon harbour has become important again for commerce and trade because of the great waterway to the *Ayeyarwady* delta, which was a large hinterland for Yangon.

After the end of Third Anglo-Myanmar War in 1885, the whole country came under British rule. Soon after this, Yangon became the capital city of Myanmar and trade and commerce gradually developed due to its locational advantages in transport. Before the Second World War, especially during the 1930s, about 5 million tons of sea-borne trade was handled by this harbour annually. During the Second World War period, the port stagnated. In 1945, it could only export 5% of its pre-war capacity. In 1948 Myanmar regained independence.

After 1960, under the government of the Revolutionary Council, with the help of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Hteedan Coal wharf in Kyeemyindine Township was built. This was connected to Sule Pagoda wharves. After 1988, the

government had repaired all the wharves. In 1991-1992, Yangon Port handled 1.45 million tons of international freight.

Nowadays, this port is under multifunctional use. Under the Port of Yangon there are 13 international berths and more than 40 jetties which are mainly pontoon type, floating ones, mainly for domestic traffic. From Ayeyarwady Division alone, more than 1.4 million passengers and 58000 tons of cargo pass through this harbour per month. Besides, rice for the whole city is imported mainly from Ayeyarwady Division through this port, having the character of a node between rural and urban linkages. Pansondan Jetty is mainly used for ferries commuting with Dalla Township, which is located at the southern bank of Yangon River as there is no bridge for road transport. There are more than 10000 daily commuters, especially government servicemen, small traders of fresh fruits and vegetable commuting through this harbour. As the cost of living and land prices are very low, some government and other workers work at Yangon and live in Dala Township. Foreign going vessels mainly use Sule Pagoda wharves and Bo Aung Kyaw wharves especially for container handling. Ocean going vessels, especially from Singapore, Malaysia, China, India, Bangladesh, South Korea and Japan use these jetties. Another aspect relating to this harbour is that more than 1500 hard-workers and more than 100 hawkers rely on this harbour for their daily survival.

This old harbour of Yangon has its own functions and processes with strong rural-urban linkages, serving as a door of importing the staple food, rice for 5.5 millions people. Although many motor roads have been constructed in Ayeyarwady Division, this harbour will continue to play its role as a major door to Yangon.

From the urban heritage point of view, this harbour can be regarded as both a natural and man made physical element, because it is a river front, having historical value and structural uniqueness because of old buildings and old port facilities as well as the number of users. Since this harbour place is fulfilling the need of people with a unique structure, it should be considered as a place which is worth to conserve as functional heritage site of Yangon City; it is, furthermore, a good point to reflect upon sustainable development.

The Chinese Temple and so-called Chinatown

Yangon has a distinct character in clustering of living quarters which is most obvious in downtown. According to this cluster pattern, the main types of business and functional situation also differ. The most prominent one is the Chinese living quarters, commonly called "Chinatown". However, it is not an enclosed part and it can be regarded only as a Chinese living quarter where Chinese people are living in their traditional living style. This distinct Chinese cluster is mainly found between 13th Street and Shwedagon Pagoda Road, and between Anawrahta Road and Strand Road. Figure 2 shows the distribution of Chinese shop houses

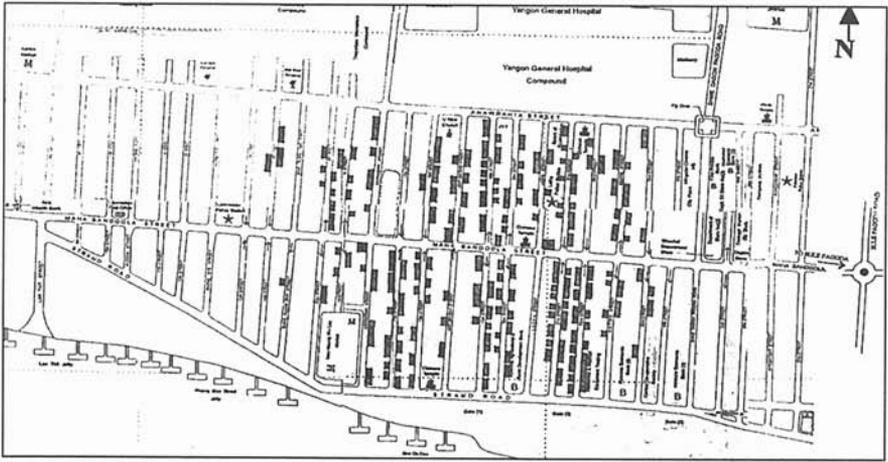


Fig. 2: Distribution of Chinese shophouses within Downtown Yangon (Source: DHSHD 2005)

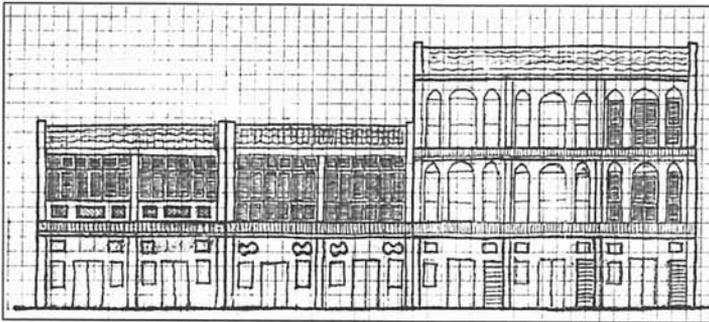


Fig. 3: Architectural style of Chinese shophouses in Downtown Yangon City (Source: DHSHD 2005)

within the downtown area and figure 3 shows the typical architectural style of Chinese shophouses. These houses still exist in the downtown area to a certain extent. However, these rows of low houses (mainly two stories, Fig. 4) are endangered by private construction companies, for this area has the highest land prices in Yangon City, and the economic return is great if they can be replaced with higher-storey buildings, namely of the Hong Kong type with usually eight floors.



Fig. 4: Typical low house in Downtown Yangon City - A typical Chinese window style at 19th Street

Close to the harbour is an old Chinese temple which was constructed in 1861 by Chinese who came from Hukyan Province of China. Today this temple is well preserved and more than 200 people come to worship daily, not only Chinese but also some Indian and Myanmar. A committee was found for the management work and to maintain the temple properly. The committee members are selected from volunteers. The temple trusteeship found a clinic and cares for sick people free of charge. This temple traditionally celebrates three festivals annually. This is a place of social contact. People, especially old Chinese, use to come daily in the early morning and evening. They use to chat and sometimes play cards or Chinese chess. It is a religious place tied with strong social coherence of Chinese people.

According to the variation in clusters of living quarters, the main functional clusters also differ. Within the downtown area, the Chinese mostly deal with goldsmith shops, buying and selling of groceries shops, whereas the Indians have specialized in iron products, electrical equipment and machineries. Formerly, the goldsmith and jewelry business was under the control of Myanmar and some Indians mainly and the whole business was confined within Shwebonthar Street. Nowadays, the business has shifted to Chinese people and the cluster of this business has also diffused to the main road of the Chinese living quarter. This is a recent shift of the occupational type and structure within downtown Yangon.

Like the Chinese living quarter, another different and distinct style of living can be found downtown in the Indian living quarter, which mainly lies between Shwedagon Pagoda Road in the west and 32nd Street in the east and between Bogyoke Aung San Road in the north and Strand Road in the south. The function they are performing is also different, and they have a certain specialization in business. The Indian mainly specialize in businesses concerned with paper, painting and machinery.

Most of the interesting heritage buildings cluster mainly in Kyauktada Township, mainly around Sule Pagoda. At present, downtown Yangon is interesting for tourists in that it is quite different from other cities, with low houses where business usually occupies the ground floor and roads in chess-board pattern with a unique appearance. Besides, it is the cluster of various ancient religious and cultural monuments, buildings of the colonial period which nowadays are mostly under institutional use, social and ethnical buildings, etc. Downtown Yangon has the opportunity to become a unique urban heritage area which is now very important to preserve. If this is not noticed by the State's authorities, it could easily be replaced with modern high-rises with glass and steel which can be found in every city of Southeast Asia. If Yangon does not care and prevents this from happening, it will lose its own identity very quickly.

Old Theingyi Market: A living heritage

The next point is the old traditional Theingyi Market. The main reason for selecting this market as an excursion point is to show two distinct aspects: one is the old building itself and the other is the close social ties between shop owners as well as to this market place, which should be considered as important aspects in sustainability and urban development of Yangon City.

According to the classification of Yangon City Development Committee there are 160 market places and these are identified as four types A, B, C and D. The Theingyi market was included in the 'A' type category. It is the second oldest market in Yangon City next to Bogyoke Market which is limited only to more wealthy people. However, Theingyi Market provides the basic needs to all classes having both wholesale and retail character. It has been an old market place for more than 100 years.

Due to the kind permission of the chief monks, this market place started on a religious place of Kyeik-myat-than-cho Pagoda many years ago before the British occupied Lower Myanmar. The pagoda compound was so large that people used to do business of selling and buying on this religious land. At the initial stage, small temporary huts were built and the small businesses gradually flourished. After Lower Myanmar was occupied by the British, an Indian ethnic group bought the whole market area on religious land from the British to build Suriti Baryar bazaar. This group already had such business in Mawlamyine, a town in Mon State which came under British rule due to the first Anglo-Myanmar War. To build a large bazaar 6.26 acres of land had been bought and then Suriti Baryar bazaar was built with bamboo and thatch roofing in 1854. Fires broke out in 1855 and again in 1857. After the fire, new A, B, C buildings with a clock tower were constructed. In 1868, D and E buildings were extended for groceries and for fruits. After 1988, the huge main buildings of the Theingyi Market, C, D, E were torn down and replaced with the present building. Only A and B buildings were left and it is now very important to keep them as heritage buildings.

After the fire outbreak, the 'A' building was rebuilt in 1905 and is located between two main roads, Anawratha Road and Maha-Bandoola Road, and between Konzaytan and 26th Street. The building is 152.4 meter long and 33.5 meter wide. The total area is 5111 square meters. Totally, 652 shops are arranged in five rows of north-south direction, which are divided by 19 rows of shops in east-west direction. In this building, the major selling commodities are meat and vegetable, pharmacy for indigenous medicinal ingredients, chemicals for food stuffs, dyes, miscellaneous things for fisheries and dry groceries.

The 'B' building was built in 1938 and is located between two main roads of Anawratha and Maha-Bandoola and between 25th and 26th Streets. The building

is 137.2 meters long and 33.5 meters wide, having an area of 4596 square meters. There are totally 505 shops in this building. These shops mainly sell clothing, cloths, cosmetics, stationery, toys and foot wares such as slippers. People doing business in this market have mainly inherited their business from their ancestors. Although there have been a few cases of reselling shops to others, most shop owners perceive them as their legacy, which should be maintained with adoration for their next generation.

These can be regarded as heritage buildings which are still well functioning in business and have a strong social coherence which should be preserved as sustainable social characteristic. Until now, this market place has not been regarded as one of the valuable heritage buildings and is even endangered by the transformation process which took place intensively after changing to a market oriented economy after 1988, like other buildings of C, D, and E type of Theingyi Market.

According to the criteria for identifying conservable elements, this market place is valued as historic, having structural uniqueness, architectural merit and functioning as a node of a highly desirable social network and support for livelihood of many families. Theingyi Market has strongly found its own social community. The evidence is the building of huge stairway, well-known as hnit-pya tan-saung at Shwedagon Pagoda constructed in 1932 and finished in 1935, by saving two pennies each day by each shop owner of Theingyi Market. It is the best outcome of strong social coherence, which is deeply rooted in religion and still strongly thriving until now. The donation ceremony in Kyeik-htee-yo Pagoda of Mon State has taken place every year.

The uniqueness is not only the old physical buildings, but also the family-like ties between shop owners, and their adoration of the old market and their pride and coherence. This is an important social aspect. Theingyi Market should be considered in an urban sustainability context in terms of cultural heritage.

Day 2: Urban Fringe of Yangon City: Development of Industrial Zone and Housing Estates

(Conducted by Daw Mie Mie Tin and Daw Aung May Oo from DHSHD on 24 June 2005).

The second day of the excursion emphasizes on urban fringe areas of Yangon City. The idea is to find out what is going on at the fringe areas, how it has changed, what the underlying processes are, who the actors are, and to consider how urban planning can effectively contribute to sustainable urban development under a market-oriented economic system.

Hlaingthayar New Town and Industrial Zone

Hlaingthayar New Town was started by relocating the fire victims from Mayangone Township in 1985. Now, it has become one of the 33 townships of Yangon with an area of 67 sq. km. The total population at present is about 250000.

According to the government policy and implementation, the establishment of large-scale industrial zones around Yangon City was started in February 1992. The main purposes of establishing industrial zones in New Towns were to employ the population there and to help to develop the area. The Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development (DHSHD) has the responsibilities for the establishment of new towns together with the creation of industrial zones.

The establishment of Hlaingthayar Industrial Zone was started on 15 February 1995. The total area planned for the whole industrial city is about 566 hectares and the area for industrial uses is about 400 hectares. The objectives of this industrial city are to create job opportunities for the local people, to upgrade social and economic development of Hlaingthayar Township and the ultimate aim is to develop the economy inviting participation in terms of technical know-how and investments from abroad and internally. The actual opening of Hlaingthayar Industrial Zone was on 18 September 1996. For the management works, the Hlaingthayar Industrial Zone Management Committee was founded on 24 July 1996.

It lies near Byintnaung Bridge and is bounded by Hlaing River, Panhlaing River and Yangon-Pathein road. The whole industrial city is divided into four zones with an additional zone for cottage industries making a total of five. Zones 1 to 4 are grouped together whereas Zone 5 is in a separate place, within the inner part of Hlaingthayar New Town.

The total number of factories in 2005 was 592, out of which 10 factories were invested by foreign companies and the rest of 582 were invested by local entrepreneurs. Completed factories which are in production are totally 435. The rest is still under construction. Among the completed factories, 30% are grain factories. The second group is related to foodstuff, having 18% and the third are garment factories, having 17.7% of the total number of factories. The total investment of this industrial zone is Kyats 57396 million and US\$ 62 million. The total number of workers working in completed factories is about 32000. The management fee is collected from factory owners, as Kyats 3000 per acre per month for local investors and US\$ 20 for foreign investors. At present, this zone is the most developed within the Yangon City area. Thus, it has been profiled to an industrial city since July 1996. However, this industrial zone is faced with drainage problems, waste disposal problems and especially an electricity shortage problem.

The development of Hlaingthayar Industrial Zone is one of the outcomes of the transformation process of Myanmar from socialist economy to market-oriented economy which usually is concentrated in its capital city Yangon. Formerly this area was paddy land and it has dramatically changed into an industrial area by government policy and implementation with the aim to promote the state's economy. However, industrial activities have negative effects on both human and physical environment if one does not take proper care. Thus, although it is desirable to establish industrial zones, one should also protect the natural environment for sustainable development of urban fringe areas in Yangon City.

Housing Estates in the Urban Fringe of Yangon City

With the introduction of a market-oriented economy, the private sector has played an important role in the State's economy, especially in construction, banking, trade and commerce. Directly related to Yangon City was the mushrooming of private construction activities. By this many housing projects, ranging from hut to apartment schemes to large luxurious housing estates have occurred.

FMI City Housing Project

According to DHSHD, FMI City is a low-cost housing project. It is about nine miles away from the main business area of Yangon City, beside the Yangon-Pathein high-way just across the Bayintnaung Bridge over Hlaing River. It was developed by FMI (First Myanmar Investment) Garden Development Ltd., which is under the Serge Pun & Associates (SPA) group of companies. The construction started in January 1996. The total area of this housing project is about 203 hectares, and at present about 873 houses and 128 rooms of condominium type are being constructed.

In this project, development is done phase by phase. It was proposed that the total number of households in this project would be over 2000 units when all these phases are completed. Reclamation of new land plots for housing continues. The newly developed land plots have various sizes, namely 446 sq. meters, 595 sq. meters and 929 sq. meters. The company provides three types of house design, from which the buyer can choose one to construct. Concerning the prices, a room on the ground floor of a four-storey condominium with 1024 sq. ft is about US\$ 12250.

This FMI City comprises a 24-hour open shopping centre and bank, swimming pool, tennis court, a school and a modern gymnasium. For transportation, the company provides motor buses to downtown Yangon. Although it was originally aimed for the middle class, in fact it is already expensive.

Pun Hlaing Golf Estate

This is a housing project which was jointly established by SPA/FMI Group and

DHSHD. It was planned to develop on 263 hectares of land located on a peninsula where Hlaing and Panhlaing Rivers meet, at the western part of Yangon. The project started in December 1997. About 130 land plots were already sold by 2005. Figure 5 shows the master plan of Pun Hlaing Golf Estate.

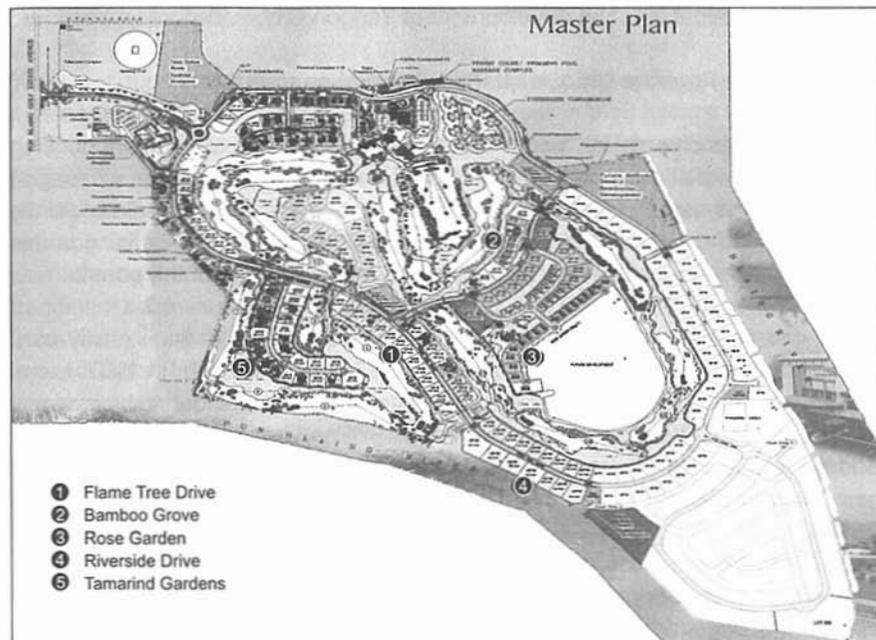


Fig. 5: Master plan of Pun Hlaing Golf Estate in Hlaingthayar New Town (Source: Management Office, Pun Hlaing Golf Estate)

This Pun Hlaing Estate infrastructure includes world-class utilities. It includes an international hospital and an international school. It also ensures that the estate provides 24-hour security and stable electricity supply, pure potable water and ecological effluent treatment and modern roads with street-lighting and effective drainage. Mainly four designs of houses are displayed, namely St. Andrews, Pun Hlaing, Blue Canyon and Pebble Beach. The total area of St. Andrews residence is 757 sq. meters and Pun Hlaing has 664 sq. meters, Blue Canyon has 352 sq. meters and Pebble Beach has an area of 400 sq. meters. The prices are out of reach of even wealthy people. For ordinary people this housing estate seems out of reality, like in heaven. It is an extremely exclusive area and this is the pride of the estate developer. "Exclusive life style" is their brand in advertisements.

Among the gated communities in Yangon City, Pun Hlaing is the most advanced in terms of money invested where the most affluent life style is found. It is also the most advanced and exclusive residential area in Myanmar. By visiting this estate,

one can see and understand that changes in urban fringe areas of Yangon City are dramatic and forceful. The former paddy lands are converted to advanced housing estate and it is shaped by private investments. This housing estate best portrays the transformation processes of the State's economy in Yangon City's urban land use context. Besides, it highlights the role of the private sector in planning for a sustainable urban development of Yangon City.

Chaukhtatgyi Pagoda: Unique quality of social space

The final excursion point is Chaukhtatgyi Pagoda. The main reason for choosing this pagoda is to show a peaceful, quite and calm place in the heart of Yangon City where it is usually difficult to find such a public place in immediate vicinity of the crowded downtown. It is also to show the daily life of monks living in this pagoda compound and to have an impression of the daily life of the people.

The name of this pagoda Chaukhtatgyi (six steps) can be derived easily as it stands on a hill having six steps. It was first built by Sir Pho Thar in 1907. Later, due to weathering, the pagoda nearly collapsed. So it was decided to build a new pagoda in 1966. The construction finished in 1974 and it became the third largest Buddha image of a lying posture in Myanmar. This pagoda possesses uniqueness in many aspects.

The physical uniqueness of this pagoda is the eyes. Usually, eyes of Buddha images are built of brick and cement and eyes are painted on it. However, the eyes of this pagoda are made of glass. The length of one eye is 1.7 meter and 0.5 meter wide. People were proud that they could make such glass eyes for the Buddha image with their limited technology at that time. The environmental uniqueness is the greenery, quiet and peacefulness of the area although there are more than 370 monks living in this compound in 54 monasteries. The social uniqueness is the annual donation festival of monk's bowl. There is no such event in any other pagoda in Yangon. It is held every year in December after a recitation of Buddhist scriptures for five days. The festival of monk's bowl takes places on the last day before afternoon. On that day, monks do not need to go around for accepting the offerings of food. Foods are already prepared in a bowl by households and they take it to this pagoda and arrange the bowls on the long table. There are 500 bowls for 500 monks. After the recitation, monks gather at the main assembly hall of this pagoda compound and when the time commences, they make a queue according to seniority. Then each monk is offered a bowl with food. It is a very simple and graceful donation of food for 500 monks. It is the unique character of this pagoda and the nature of the people who live nearby and their social context to religion that has shaped the social environments in a unique and peaceful way.

Nowadays, the globalization process has some effects on this pagoda insofar as numerous tourists have let inscribed their names on the high wall of this pagoda building by donating money to show some sign to late comers or some way of wishing for next visits. The original and traditional meaning of putting one's name in donation is to share the goodness with others, and this was changed to other purposes by tourists.

The compound is in the heart of the city, but quiet, calm and peaceful with green spaces where people usually come to take a rest in their leisure time. Besides, due to the large trees usually kept by monasteries, this environment creates a favourable climatic situation. The whole pagoda compound serves as a good example for the aspect of people's behaviour rooted in tradition and religion as an important social as well as physical environment of Yangon City. This place was already naturally established, synchronized with a good context of people's traditional behaviour through religion. This is a place of mental desire, which is always freely open for the public. However, strong urban management and control is needed, for if the population of the surrounding area would rapidly increase the large vacant area around this pagoda compound could easily be congested with people and it would create a filthy environment. Thus, this area should be kept with great care to sustain the existing good urban environment.

Conclusion

At the very beginning of the first day, the excursion started with the port area because it is the origin of Yangon City. Until now, it is one of the main functional points of Yangon City with old structure, having strong rural-urban linkages, which is economically, socially and environmentally important. Besides, through seeing the present situation of the old harbour place, it can be regarded as an urban heritage with the aspect of man-made physical environment as well as for the daily survival of some families.

After the old harbour, the next visit was to the Old Chinese Temple on Strand Road, close to the harbour. This temple also shows the extent of Chinese intrusion into Yangon during the past time and at present, it is becoming an important social place in Yangon especially for the Chinese. The building itself is an urban heritage. After visiting the Chinese temple, a walk through the Chinese living quarter of downtown Yangon was made. There are many unique low shop houses of Chinese style in downtown Yangon that have great potential to attract tourists.

The third place was the century-old Theingyi Market, which supplies basic things to ordinary people in a traditionally functioning style. A strong social coherence between shop owners and their old market building was found and this repre-

sents a sustainable cultural heritage which is endangered by present transformation processes.

The Downtown of Yangon City is the cluster of heritage buildings, providing a link between the past and present. In the past few years, considerable change took place in some places by erecting new high-rise buildings, which were constructed through the private sector. Nevertheless, Yangon still possesses its low-storey houses to a considerable amount creating its own uniqueness. If it is not controlled, this unique character which is also attracting tourists, will get lost. The preservation of this uniqueness in harmonious balance with development aims is important for the tourist industry. So, preserving the existing cultural and historical settings of the downtown area makes a good national economic sense as tourism contributes substantially to the national economy.

On the second day of the excursion, a visit to Hlaingthayar new town was made to show what is going on in urban fringe areas of Yangon City. In this fringe area, a new town was established and later an industrial zone followed to employ the new town population and to help to develop the area. Although this is favourable, there will always be the danger that if the industrial zone is not managed well with proper planning there will be a great potential for environmental deterioration which is always more costly to recover. Thus, industrial zone management plays an important role in sustainable urban development in fringe areas of Yangon City.

In Hlaingthayar new town, two housing estates were visited, FMI Garden City and Pun Hlaing Golf Estate. These housing projects best portray the transformation processes of the State's economy in an urban land use context. The most prominent and most exclusive gated community is Pun Hlaing Golf Estate. This underlines the fact that the role of the private sector should be kept in paving the way for sustainable urban development of Yangon City.

The final point was Chaukhtatgyi Pagoda with a look at the normal life of monks and people. It is an environmentally sound place, which had naturally occurred in good context with religion resulting in a sustainable open space for public.

Sustainable urban development is really the question of how urban planning and management is working towards desirable developments with least negative impacts. This excursion pointed out that it is urgent to preserve the existing unique characteristics of Downtown Yangon. It also highlighted the role of private sectors in planning Yangon City toward sustainable urban development.

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