

CHARLTONS

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Myanmar Highlights

10 September 2013

• We are pleased to announce that Charltons has been named the “Boutique/Specialist Law Firm of the Year” at the Macallan ALB Hong Kong Law Awards 2013.



• Young lawyers – Charltons is pleased to announce the appointment of Ma Wai Wai Khaing, Ma Kyawt Min Min, Ko Tun Min Soe, Ma Moe Moe Aye, Ma Khin and U Moe Kyaw to the Charlton’s Myanmar staff. As part of an important CSR activity, Charlton’s will offer training to all applicants who interviewed for the positions. Senior Partner Julia Charlton said, “We hope to encourage our young Myanmar lawyers to pursue their chosen profession, and to look past litigation to corporate law, finance and investment in these rapidly developing times.”

• While not confirmed at press-time in August, there has been interest in ANA’s planned acquisition of Asian Wings for back-of-the-house training and international airline services. The project has the cachet of another famous name in aviation history – Pan Am. Earlier this year, Pan Am Holdings Corp. was sold to ANA for \$169 million, comprised of pilot and crew training facilities in Miami and San Francisco, and the iconic logo images.

• Kye Mon reports on the first international flights of Nok Air from Mae Sot to Mawlamyine on Sep.7, confirming tourist access through all three Myanmar/Thai border crossings.

• New Light of Myanmar confirms sine die for Myanmar’s 7th regular Parliamentary session on Aug. 29 with 16 new Laws established, including the Telecommunications Bill and the Constitutional Review Commission. Parliamentary leaders noted attendance by more than 3500 local observers, and 75 foreign delegates. When the next session convenes in October, 12 measures will be considered, most relating to economics and business infrastructure.

• SEA-Games Secretariat has issued a tender for celebratory opening and closing events in Naypyitaw and Yangon for 18-21 December 2013. The Secretariat is working with 55 hotels in Naypyitaw and the SEA-Games Sports Village to ensure comfortable accommodations for athletes, officials and observers at the Olympic Level events.

• In telecommunications news, a dual-SIM card (GSM/GSM or GSM/CDMA) will be available shortly in Myanmar. Samsung announced rollout of its Galaxy III Note for 27 September 2013.

• The Myanmar Foreign Trade Bank tender for banking software will conclude on Sep. 6, 2013.

- President Thein Sein's official remarks at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Nanning focused the importance of stability for the ASEAN and China economies as vital for the world economy.



- Education reform – Several recent partnerships with India, Thailand, Korea, Japan and the USA have highlighted reopening of Yangon and Mandalay universities. Experts in education note the importance of a strategic approach to training and teaching as critical for the next generation. The overall system involved more than 161 institutions of higher education around the country, all controlled by the Ministry of Education as well as subject-matter ministries. There are 64 universities or colleges focused on education, 61 on Science/Technology, 15 on Health, 5 for Defense and Cooperatives, 2 each for Transportation, Border Affairs and Culture, and 1 each for Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Economics, Civil Service, and Religious Affairs. New pilot programs are planned for Journalism, Social Sciences (including History, Geography, Governance) and across the board training in critical analysis and logic, without reliance on rote-learning for examinations. Recent regional meetings have focused on area expertise – i.e., the \$12 billion BPO industry relies heavily on telecom, spoken English and labour skills and employs more than 800,000 young workers in the Philippines and India. Many of these are global service centers for bank processing, call centers, technical assistance, airline or hotel reservations, and medical reporting. India is going a step further – in September, 2013, the Mandalay Institute of Technology will admit its first students, modelled after the highly prestigious India Institute of Technology with official support. International institutions of higher learning are taking a close look at the new education reform bill, which includes a proviso for overseas schools to invest and offer degrees.

- Myanmar Business Today (first edition) reports that freight and logistics specialists DAMCO have received a permanent Myanmar license. The company is a subsidiary of the Danish Maersk Line, which operates air, land and sea facilities in 90 countries, and is actively pursuing development of container and consolidation yards for various industries in Myanmar.

- China, Thailand and Hong Kong and 32 other nations lead Foreign Direct Investment in Myanmar's total of US\$42.95 billion through July, 2013. The figure is expected to top US \$98 billion in the calendar year.

- The Oxford Business Group (OBG) will publish an overview of Tax Reforms for foreign investors; the report is prepared under the aegis of MIC (Myanmar Investment Corp.) and Price-Waterhouse-Coopers in online and hard-copy formats.

- Myanmar Business Today provided an overview of the newly signed Central Bank of Myanmar Law and positive trends for transparency, oversight of commercial banks, development of capital markets and management of official foreign exchange reserves. The new CBM Governor is thought to be U Kyaw Kyaw Maung of the Ministry of Finance, and the post will be upgraded to Ministerial level.

- A recently-reenergised acronym speaks to shifting global trends – B-C-I-M, for the central block of Asia encompassing the Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation, and development of the BCIM Economic Corridor. The region holds 40% of the world's population, 9 % of the global landmass, and just 7.3% of the global GDP – calculated to grow in the near term and focused on energy security, hydrocarbons and regional infrastructure.

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