

**Religion Newswriters Training Schedule**  
**Covering Religious Freedom and Conflict**  
**November 11-15, 2014**  
**Yangon, Myanmar**

**Welcome to this four-day training on covering religion and religious freedom issues in Myanmar. This program is sponsored by the professional journalism association Religion Newswriters, in association with the University of Missouri School of Journalism and Religion News Service. It is made possible through generous support from the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office.**

**CONTACTS:**

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**LOGISTICS**

From Tuesday evening (November 11) through Saturday evening (November 15), all group meals will be paid for by Religion Newswriters staff.

**ARRIVALS AND DINNER Tues, Nov 11, 2014)**

- All non-Yangon-based trainees arrive and check into **New Aye Yar (New Ayar) Hotel** throughout the day.
  - *New Aye Yar is located at No.170/176, Bo Aung Kyaw Street, Botataung Township, Yangon. It is on the Northeast corner of Merchant Road and Bo Aung Kyaw St, about 20 meters up Bo Aung Kyaw. Phone: 256938~44, 256856~7383739*
  - Upon arrival, please call or text Brian or Yu Yu (phone numbers above)
- **18:30** Non-Yangon trainees meet in hotel lobby. We will walk or take taxis to **Junior Duck** for dinner. Yangon-based trainees should travel to meet us at Junior Duck restaurant. Vegetarian options will be available.
  - *Junior Duck Address: Nanthidar Compound, Pan Soe Tan Saikkan Strand Rd, Yangon. Phone: +95 1 249 421.*
- **18:45 - 20:30 Dinner** - Informal networking dinner and brief overview of the next few days.
- **\*\*After dinner, trainees who traveled from outside Yangon should see Debra Mason to get reimbursement for travel costs.**

**HOMEWORK:** If you have not completed the self-assessment survey and world religion quiz that were emailed to you in English and Burmese, please do so and bring them along to the training Wednesday morning.

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**TRAINING DAY 1 (Wed, Nov 12, 2014)**

**LOCATION: Unless otherwise specified, all events will be held in the 11th floor meeting room of the New Aye Yar Hotel. Breakfast will be in the hotel lobby.**

- 7:00 - 9:00      **Breakfast in New Aye Yar Hotel lobby** (Yangon-based trainees welcome to join)
- 9:00 - 9:20      Trainer and trainee introductions in 11th floor meeting room of New Aye Yar Hotel
- 9:20 - 9:40      Trainers' overview of week's program (*Brian*)
- 9:40 - 10:30     **Coffee/snacks** during quiz recap on general knowledge of religious issues (*Eric*)
- 10:30 - 12:00    Overview of global religious demographics and tensions with group discussion of Myanmar and regional issues (*Debra and Brian and Sanda*)
- 12:00 - 12:30    Self-appraisal of personal values and beliefs, and how these influence the journalists' interpretation and treatment of religion stories. Journalists to reflect on their strengths in reporting and identify particular areas that need more work. (*Eric and Sanda*)
- 12:30 - 13:30    **Lunch at New Aye Yar Hotel** to discuss general challenges our journalists face and specific obstacles they face when covering religion (*All*)
- 13:30 - 14:15    Overview of ORACLE and FACTS models of religion reporting (*Eric*)
- 14:15 - 15:00    Trainees work in small groups on solutions to key challenges (identified during lunch) in the legal and political contexts of Myanmar. Small groups report back top 5 solutions (*All*)
- 14:45 - 15:00    **Coffee and snack** break
- 15:00 - 16:00    **Guest speaker U Thiha Saw, Chief Editor at Myanmar Times and Chairman of the Board of Directors at Myanmar Journalism Institute**, on religion's role in the media code of conduct
- 16:00 - 16:45    International religious and media freedom issues (*Brian*)
- 16:45 - 17:15    Start brainstorming religion story ideas that would work in different newsrooms/contexts across Myanmar based on the day's discussions (*All*)
- 17:15 - 18:30    Break
- 18:30 - 20:30    **Dinner at Monsoon Restaurant** (upstairs) - 5-min walk from hotel
  - **Meet in hotel lobby at 18:15 to walk over to Monsoon**
  - Address: 85-87 Thein Phyu Rd (btwn Stand Rd and Merchant Rd). Phone: +951295 224

*All trainees will participate in nightly homework exercises, which will contribute to the trainees' experience thinking, writing and reporting about the issues with the benefit of advice from trainers. All homework exercises should be completed before breakfast the following morning.*

**Day 1 Homework:** Prepare three religion story ideas you plan to pursue that address difficult or sensitive topics in Myanmar. Outline challenges you expect to face and suggested solutions for overcoming those challenges based on today's discussions. Rank the three stories in the order of which you would most like to pursue in the coming days. Bring your three story ideas to Day Two of trainings to discuss them with the group.

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**TRAINING DAY 2 (Thurs, Nov 13, 2014)**

**LOCATION: Unless otherwise specified, all events will be held in the 11th floor meeting room of the New Aye Yar Hotel. Breakfast will be in the hotel lobby.**

- 7:00 - 9:00      **Breakfast in New Aye Yar Hotel lobby** (Yangon trainees are welcome to join)
- 9:00 - 9:15      Recap main points from Day 1 discussion (*Brian and Sanda*)
- 9:15 - 10:30     Reporting on Religion Primer including reporting tips for each faith tradition (*Debra*)
- 10:30 - 10:45     **Coffee and snack break**
- 10:45 - 12:00     Trainees present their homework in two small groups and trainers choose which one or two stories each trainee will pursue (*All*)
- 12:00 - 13:00     **Lunch at New Aye Yar Hotel** Guest speaker **Htaike Htaike Aung, Program Manager, Myanmar ICT for Development Organisation (MIDO), (Panzagar)** on how journalists can best address issues of online religious hate speech in their reporting (*Brian introduction*)
- 13:00 - 13:30     Multimedia packaging of stories (*Eric*)
- 13:30 - 15:30     Conflict sensitivity reporting (*Sanda*)
- 15:30 - 15:45     **Coffee and snack break**
- 15:45 - 17:00     *Potential guest speaker or training spillover time*
- 17:00 - 19:00     **Dinner at New Aye Yar Hotel lobby (Rasa Rasa)** (no program). This is a good time to work on your homework and discuss it with colleagues.
- 19:00 - 20:45     **Public panel at New Aye Yar Hotel 11th floor**
  - “Reflecting on Faith in Myanmar Media” - A panel of religious leaders representing Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism will discuss how they see local media portrayals of their faiths. Journalists and invited guests will respond to the panelists' remarks, and a short reception will follow. Speakers include:
    - **U Aye Lwin** - Chief Convener, The Islamic Centre of Myanmar; Founding Member, Religions for Peace
    - **U Myint Swe** - President, Ratana Metta Organization; Chairman, Religions for Peace
    - **Dr Saw Hlaing Bwa** - Professor, Myanmar Institute of Theology
    - **U Aung Naing** - Hindu community; Executive committee member, Religions for Peace
    - **Moderator: U Myint Kyaw**, Secretary General, Myanmar Journalist Network
- 20:45 - 21:30     **Post-event reception at New Aye Yar Hotel** All trainees and invited guests are welcome to attend.

**HOMEWORK:** Revise story ideas with trainer feedback, determine potential sources, develop editorial pitch for one or two stories to be delivered tomorrow.

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**TRAINING DAY 3 (Fri, Nov 14, 2014):**

**LOCATION: In the morning we will have a field trip to religious sites. Afternoon events will be held in the 11th floor meeting room of the New Aye Yar Hotel. Lunch is at Linn's Restaurant and dinner is at Gekko. Breakfast is in the hotel lobby.**

- 7:00 - 8:00      **Breakfast** in New Aye Yar Hotel lobby (Yangon-based trainees welcome to join).  
\***ALL trainees must be in hotel lobby and ready to leave by 7:45 am.**
- 8:00 - 12:00      Field trip to Thingangyun religious sites and interviews with local faith leaders.
  - \***Snacks on the bus, but bring water.**
  - *Please wear clothes that cover your arms and legs. Women should bring a headscarf.*
- 12:00 - 13:00      **Lunch at Linn's Restaurant** (Thumingalar Street in Thingangyun Township)
- 13:00 - 14:00      Return to New Aye Yar hotel
- 14:00 - 15:00      Back in New Aye Yar training rooms, **guest speaker Myint Kyaw, Secretary General of the Myanmar Journalist Network**, on media development challenges and opportunities in Myanmar.
- 15:00 - 16:00:      Trainees gives their one or two story "pitches" in two small groups and get feedback on their ideas (*All*). Update story pitches based on feedback and start mapping stories.
- 15:30      **Coffee and snacks brought up**
- 16:00 - 17:00      **Guest speaker Michael Pan, Project Director at Internews' Myanmar Media Lab**, will speak about conflict-sensitive reporting and religious issues affecting ethnic minority states.
- 17:00 - 18:00      Break
- 18:30 - 20:30      **Dinner at Gekko** (On Merchant Rd between 37th and Pansodan).
  - \**Meet in hotel lobby at 18:15 to walk to Gekko*
  - **Ma Thida, author and human rights activist**, will speak about recent changes in media freedom and how reporters can best discuss issues around religion in the face of new challenges.

**HOMEWORK:** Finalize introductory paragraphs and outlines of your story/stories.

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**TRAINING DAY 4 (Sat, Nov 15, 2014):**

**LOCATION: All events and lunch will be held in the 11th floor meeting room of the New Aye Yar Hotel. Dinner will be at Le Nacha. Breakfast is in the hotel lobby.**

- 7:00 - 9:00      **Breakfast in New Aye Yar Hotel lobby** (Yangon-based trainees welcome to join)
- 9:00 - 12:00    Work on stories. Deliver working draft to trainers for review and translation as and when ready. *All trainers will be available to assist as necessary.*
- 10:30 - 11:00    **Coffee and snacks**
- 12:00 - 13:30    **Lunch at New Aye Yar Hotel 11th floor** Group discussion concerning how trainees will employ best practices in their newsroom and effectively use and share the training resources *(All)*
- 13:30 - 16:00    Trainers look at all story drafts to make sure journalists are on the right track and that all stories are written with an international audience in mind. While trainers provide one-on-one feedback to journalists, journalists continue their reporting by phone and email *(All)*
- 15:30            **Coffee and snacks**
- 16:00 - 17:00    Trainees and trainers gather to draft and present a resolution on best practices for reporting on religion in Myanmar based on their experiences and knowledge gained from training sessions *(All)*
- 17:00 - 17:30    Wrap-up, verbal feedback and evaluations for trainers, assign deadlines for stories. Award Certificates of Completion.
- 18.00 - 20.00    Dinner at **Le Nacha** Thai restaurant
  - Address: 85 Shin Saw Pu Road
  - **\*Taxis will depart from hotel lobby at 18:00 sharp.**
  - ***Please inform Yu Yu and Brian if you will not attend this dinner by Wednesday morning.***
- Non-Yangon-based trainees stay in hotel or depart after dinner.
  - ***Please inform Yu Yu and Brian if you plan to check out of the hotel on Saturday.***

***\*\*All Yangon-based trainees should see Debra Mason on Saturday afternoon to receive local travel reimbursements for taxis or local transport. You will be reimbursed \$50 if you joined us for Tuesday dinner, \$40 if not (representing \$5 for each taxi trip made).***

**Post Training Deadlines:**

**November 24:** Trainees send full story/stories to trainers for review and feedback.

**December 1:** Trainers deliver feedback.

**December 8:** Trainees deliver final story/stories for publication.