

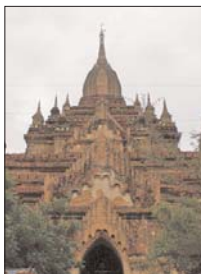
FALLING IN LOVE WITH MYANMAR -Part 2



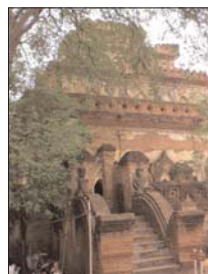
Shwe-zee-gon Pagoda



Manuha temple



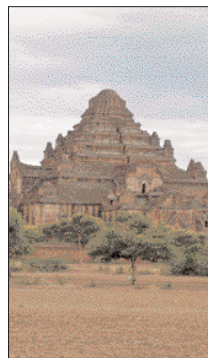
Hti Lo Min Lo Temple



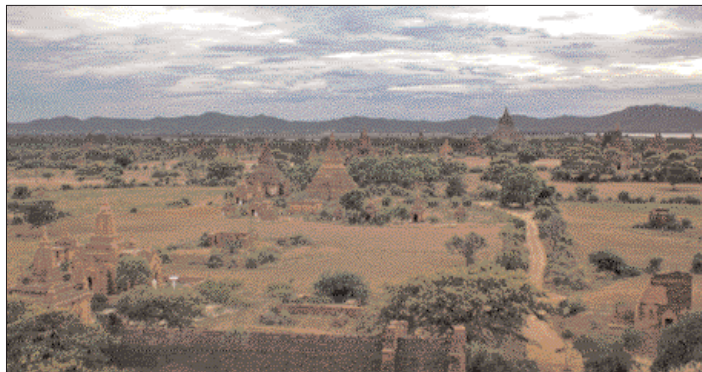
Ananda Oak Kyauing



Maha Bodhi



Dhama-yan-gyi Temple



Shwe-san-taw Pagoda

Bagan - An ancient city of Myanmar

(Continued from last week)

Text and Pictures
GANGA ILLEPERUMA
in Bagan - Myanmar

After staying in Yangon, I reached Bagan by the domestic flight on the second morning with our group. We flew over the Irrawaddy river which took us only one hour. But buses make the trip in about 16 hours or an adventurous traveller can reduce the time by 2 hours taking a car.

Bagan is in the dry zone and is visually very similar to the ancient cities of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa because it was also the capital before the 11th and 13th centuries which still has relics of thousands of pagodas. From air many pagodas were noticeable in this area more than the huge trees.

Bagan's main economy is also based on cultivating soya beans, palms and peanuts predominant.

Before the 11th century those living in this area were not Buddhists. They worshipped trees, mountains and believed in protective spirits too. The monk who was called Shi Arahan came from the Mon State and introduced Buddhism to those people and today we see 95 percent people are Buddhists in this area.

Before the introduction of Buddhism people who lived in Bagan practiced uncommon rituals. One ritual was that a bride had to go to the monastery to sleep on the night of the wedding eve.

Comparing with other cities in Myanmar, Bagan is still unpolluted from a tourist's point of view. It is dotted with thousands of ancient pagodas, stupas, shrines and attractive monuments. It is one of the richest archaeological sites in Southeast Asia with over 2000 monuments still standing, some in ruins.

There were originally about 4500, but many disappeared by the floods and earthquakes. Among these many pagodas, our group of Travellers visited a few places which have high historical and archaeological value.

Shwe-zee-gon Pagoda

Built under the command of king 'Anaw-ya-hita' who enshrined the Tooth Relic and Collar Bones of the Buddha which were presented by Sri Lanka legend has it that these sacred relics were brought to Bagan on the back of a Royal White Elephant. The king made a wish, and the pagoda was built on the site where the royal elephant knelt-down. It is said that the architecture of this Pagoda is the prototype of the later Myanmar Stupa.

Hti Lo Min Lo Temple

The word 'Hti (Minlo)' literally means desired by the royal white umbrella. It is one of the largest temples of Bagan. The double storied structure rising 50 meters above the ground was similar to the architecture of the famous 'Sula-mani' temple.

Ananda Oak Kyauing

This simply means Brick Monastery and is situated within the compound of the Ananda Temple. It is a small red brick building whose inner walls are covered with frescoes.

Lawka Nanda Chedi

This temple is situated on the banks of the Irrawaddy river and it means 'lappiness of the world'. Compared with the other stupas this has a different shape which is dome shaped.

Maha Bodhi

The Maha Bodhi Temple of Bagan was known to have been modelled after the famous Maha Bodhi temple in Bodhi Gaya, Bihar State of India. There are also seven monuments in the compound making the seven places (Sath Sathya) in Maha Bodhi.

Sula-Mani

Sula-Mani means the jewel of the crown and the



Ananda Temple

Here also enshrined a relic which was gifted by Sri Lanka. This stupa was built to mark the territory of Bagan our guide Nway U Khine, said.

Manuha temple

King Ashoka introduced Buddhism to Manuha king who ruled the Mon state. Then king Anaw-ya-hita requested the Buddhist scriptures from Manuha king but he refused to part with them. King Anaw-ya-hita was furious and he fought with king Manuha and took him as a prisoner with 30,000 artists and dancers. He ordered king Manuha to build a temple in Bagan and he built it because of his request. It is called the Manuha temple. The temple shelters three big statues of the Buddha as well as of the reclining Buddha image in the back chamber. Looking at these massive Buddha statues in narrow space, visitors can understand the anger and unhappiness of the Mon king.

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Sula-Mani

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the same time it refers to the name of the pagoda in the celestial being in which the hair of prince Siddhartha at the time of his renunciation was enshrined. On this place the king found precious rubies and he built this temple named Sulamani.

Dhama-yan-gyi Temple

This most massive temple in Bagan was constructed by king 'Nara-tha' in the mid 12th century. The masonry of this temple was so remarkable that even a needle cannot penetrate between two bricks. Besides, the complicated architectural style of this temple raises a debate on the number of floors and on the completion of the building. What is more is the founder of this temple had a bad reputation for killing his father and his brother so as to claim the throne. The story is told founder had killed the persons who were responsible for the error in this amazing edifice during the construction. These reasons generate so many riddles and mysteries giving it a reputation being of haunted. Today too villagers who live in this area scared to visit this temple at night.

Shwe-san-taw Pagoda

The word 'Shwe-san-taw' literally means 'the golden hair of the Buddha' which is built by king 'Anaw-ya-hita'. In former days the corner of the terrace was adorned with statues of Hindu gods and access is possible to climb to the highest point of the terrace from where panoramic views of the city and the sunset could be viewed.

Next week

Mandale
The second capital city of Myanmar

The Palms-Beruwala

Formerly known as Wornels Reef



An aerial view of The Palms Hotel

The Palms is situated in the golden beach coast in down south Beruwala, 55km away from the city of Colombo on the famous Beruwala Golden Mile stretch.

The Palms hotel opens up to the magnificent white sandy beaches engulfed by the reef and surrounded by a canopy of greenery, thus creating an ambience for experiencing picture perfect sun sets.

The property features 96 Standard rooms and 8 suites. These well designed rooms having all modern amenities. The unique feature being that from every room in the resort you have a panoramic view of the ocean.

Rooms are filled with all modern amenities, and the view from the room is simply breathtaking. Special sea food restaurant serves you the delicate dishes and its called Fishermen Wharf. And the large swimming

pool with the kiddies pool will keep you cool under the sun.

The Palms formerly known as Wornels Reef changed their name in 2005 after the big refurbishment. It has undergone extensive improvements now catering to the high end market. The unique feature of the property by the beach is that the waters are calm, where sea bathing is recommended which is also enclosed by a reef, opening up to the wide Indian Ocean and for the guests who love fishing, the reef can also serve as a pier to sit down with a fishing rod.

The open air restaurant serves many kinds of delicacies food and they have a buffet for the three main meals. Every night they organise entertainment such as calypso, snake show, circus, acrobats, cultural show and BBQ.

We have a very good demand from England, Belgium, Russia, Poland and Germany too. For the honeymooners we do a special promotion said Front Office Manager, Ruchira Karunaratne.

For the special request from the guests on their birth days, anniversaries or

any other occasions we organise the sea food dinner at the 'Watch Hut' which is facing the sea she added.

The palms has a 150 pax conference hall and they will open their new banquet hall which is called 'Golden

Palms' soon. In addition they do foreign weddings as well.

This three wings hotel has a shopping arcade, gym, Gem & jewelry shop, 24 hours open coffee shop and an Ayurveda centre which has four therapies. @

Answer of September 11 Quiz: Six clusters
Winner: Chandrika Lord. 567/02. Examuthu Mawatha, Talawatu Gado

Question: Named of the sea food restaurant of The Palms

Name: _____

Address: _____

Occupation: _____

Contact No: _____

(Please send this coupon duly filled in a postcard to Travel Quiz, Daily Mirror, 39-42, Newmarket Road, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1JL, UK. Any number of entries may be sent but they must be in the coupon published in the Daily Mirror. Prizes will not be accepted. The lucky winner will receive a one night's accommodation (Double). The Palms-Beruwala on full board basis.