



PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Embassy and Ministry of Culture Announce Historic Partnership to Preserve Shwe Nan-Daw Monastery in Mandalay

Yangon – On July 25, U.S. Ambassador Derek Mitchell and Deputy Minister of Culture U Than Swe met in Mandalay to announce a historic new partnership between the U.S. Embassy and the Ministry of Culture to undertake the cultural preservation of the Shwe Nan-Daw Monastery (Shwe Kyaung).

“This partnership is a celebration of this country’s rich cultural and architectural heritage,” **said Ambassador Mitchell.** “Even as this country develops and modernizes, it is important to preserve its unique heritage for future generations. We are honored to begin this partnership with the Ministry of Culture, which will foster collaboration between U.S. and local preservation experts and help train a team of experts to conduct other preservation efforts in the future.”

The two-year, multi-phased project will involve the U.S. Embassy, the Ministry of Culture, and a U.S.-based non-profit conservation organization, World Monuments Fund (WMF). The project will survey and document conservation needs at Shwe Nan-Daw Monastery, undertake a comprehensive conservation effort, and train a team of local professionals in the highest standards for conservation of teak monasteries.

The project builds on several initiatives by the Embassy to work with the government and civil society groups on promoting respect for the diverse cultures and religions of this country.

The cultural preservation of the Shwe Nan-Daw will be implemented with significant support from the U.S. Department of State’s Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP), which has committed \$500,000 to the project. Additional support will be provided by the Ministry of Culture and WMF.

Shwe Nan-Daw Monastery is one of the most visited monasteries in the country. It formerly served as the northern chamber of Mandalay’s Glass Palace, and it is the only apartment of the former 19th century Kon Baung palace to survive World War II. The original chamber was built by King Mindon, who died inside, and later moved to its current location and refurbished as a monastery by King Mindon’s son, King Thibaw.

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