

Nomination form
International Memory of the World Register

Myazedi Quadrilingual Stone Inscription

2014-45

1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

In Myanmar, the stone inscriptions, inscribed with Pyu, Mon and Myanmar languages have been found all over the country since proto-historic time. It has flourished and innovated in Bagan. During the Bagan Era, there have been discovered a lot of stone inscriptions with various languages medium. These inscriptions have documented what those people records, wishes and curses what they donate for Buddhist religious merit and deed since eight hundred years ago in Myanmar and her neighbouring.

Myazedi quadrilingual stone inscription, located in Bagan Historic city, is unique and significance written documents of Myanmar history, religion and culture in 12th century A.D. The inscription inscribed in A.D. 1113. There are described with four languages, such as Pyu, Mon, Myanmar and Pali, on each of the four faces. Myazedi stone inscription is the earliest Myanmar language document with chronological date. It is also very rare inscribed pillar of quadrilingual inscription in regional concerned. It is firmly identified the authenticity and intact writing document in 12th century A.D.

That stone inscription was discovered at Myazedi Pagoda near Myingaba village in Ancient Bagan City in 1886-87. This is also known as Myazedi inscription by the name of that pagoda.

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Department of Archaeology and National Museum
Ministry of Culture,
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

The Department of Archaeology and National Museum has the authority to preserve and safeguard the nominated heritage. The department reviews historical documents, religious edifices and archival record of national significant collections. It is also organizes activities to raise people's awareness of the value of documents, the necessity of preservation and the right to access the heritage widely. The Department of Archaeology and National Museum, Ministry of Culture has been undertaking the conservation and dissemination of nominated heritage.

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

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2.4 Contact details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>
Same as above mention	

<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Facsimile</i>	<i>Email</i>
Same as above mention		

3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

Myazedi Quadrilingual Stone Inscription

Myazedi stone inscription is located at the Bagan Archaeological Museum. Prince Rajakumar, son of King Kyansittha (1084-1112) inscribed the inscription in A.D 1113.

3.4 History/provenance

There are two such inscriptions. These two inscriptions are identical and set up by Prince Rajakumar of the Bagan period. Therefore they are well known in Myanmar history as Myazedi stone inscription, or Kubyaukkyi stone inscription or Rajakumar stone inscription.

Nominated one (Pillar 'A') is located and displayed at Bagan Archaeological Museum, another one is now set upon the platform of Myazedi pagoda. These two Myazedi inscription stone pillars were discovered Dr E. Forchhammer, Professor of Pali at the Rangoon College and Government Archaeologist at Myinkaba, a small locality quite near to Bagan, in 1886-87 and 1904. The better preserved pillar (Pillar 'A') was found near the Myazedi pagoda, quite close to it, on the north, in front of a small ruined square temple, in which the remnants of a seated Buddha may still be seen. It was in the good state of preservation and removed to the Bagan Museum, near the Ananda temple in 1904. It was removed again to the new octagonal archaeological museum in 1979. Finally, in 1998, it is placed and displayed in the recent Bagan Archaeological Museum.

Discovering of Pillar 'B', it is so interesting and remarkable. The story of Pillar 'B' is as follow; "the other pillar, which contains replicas of the former's inscription, was badly broken; Forchhammer recovered two pieces of upper half within the precincts of the Kubyaukkyi temple. The third piece completing the upper part was discovered, in 1904, in the surrounding wall of the Myazedi platform. The lower half was found in an erect position near a small old brick building, closed to the Myazedi. All these pieces were badly weathered and a large proportion of the letters had disappeared, but the remains are beautifully clear. After the restored of several portions it was erected on the platform of the Myazedi pagoda." This pillar was designated as 'B'.

The one ('A') on display at the Bagan Archaeological Museum is a square pillar of sand stone, 5 feet 11 inches high, 1 foot 2 inches wide with an inscribed area of 3 feet

6 inches. The one ('B') on the platform of Myazedi Pagoda has the two sides wider than the other sides.

4.0 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

Name	Address	
Department of Archaeology and National Museum	Building No.35, Ministry of Culture, Nay Pyi Taw	
Telephone	Facsimile	Email
95-67-408038	95-67-408286	Kyawoolwin.arch@gmail.com m.myanmarculture@gmail.com

4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

Name	Address	
Same as above mention		
Telephone	Facsimile	Email
Same as above mention		

4.3 Legal status

The nominated heritage is owned and managed by the Department of Archaeology and National Museum, Ministry of Culture. Requests can be made to read and copy them at the Department of Archaeology and National Museum.

4.4 Accessibility

People can see the Myazedi stone inscription at Bagan Archaeological Museum and Myazedi Pagoda. For study purpose, take permission from the Department of Archaeology and National Museum, Ministry of Culture.

Myazedi stone inscription has been circulated and copied with following publications and documentations;

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1. 1891. Pagan, Pinya, Innwa Inscriptions. Supt, Government Printing, Burma.
 2. 1919. Inscription of Burma. Portfolio IV. Down to 702 B.E (1340 A.D.)
 3. 1919. Taw Sein Ko and C. Duroiselle, eds. (1919) "*The Burmese face of the Myazedi Inscription at Pagan*", Epigraphia Birmanica being Lithic and Other Inscription of Burma. Vol.1 Pt.1. Rangoon: Archaeological Survey of India, 1919.
 4. 1928. Luce, G.H & Pe Mg Tin. Selected Pagan Inscription. Rangoon University Press. (In Myanmar Text)

The Department of Archaeology and National Museum is accessible for consultation and research.

4.5 Copyright status

The documents and texts are not subject to copyright. It is requested that the sources of the documents be mentioned when quoted in any publication.

5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 Authenticity.

The nominated heritage dates back to 12th century A.D. It is unique and irreplaceable in the world. The Myazedi stone inscription is original establishment. The authenticity of the collections of Myazedi inscription is not in doubt. That inscription was inscribed by Prince Rajakumar who was a son of King Kyansittha ruled in Bagan Empire from AD 1086-1112. It expressed accurate chronological date of historic Bagan era in Myanmar. It is also proving the clarification of contradict between the date of reigned the Bagan Dynasty as well as ascending the throne of King Kyansittha. Moreover, it is also identified with confusing between writing chronicles, documents and other historical resources. It is one of the earliest writing documents in Myanmar language as well as using the quadrilingual languages in Myanmar and Southeast Asia region. It is one of the most favourable evidence for studying the various aspects in ancient history of Myanmar. Since its discovery, it has been thoroughly read and studied by Myanmar and foreign scholars, historians, linguists, and epigraphists. Those who scholars have been trusted in its authenticity.

5.2 World significance

Myazedi stone inscription is the oldest Myanmar Language inscription. Myazedi stone inscription described with four languages for inscribed two types of scripts, namely, Pallava and Kadamba alphabets. These alphabets derived from Asoka Brahmi scripts and letters. It is firm evidence for connecting between Tibeto-Burman, Mon-Khamar and Indian language and literature. Concerned with the Myazedi inscription those whose scholars utilized for deciphering and understanding among the relation of Tibeto-Burman, Mon-Khamar and Indian language. It is also tangible relic in cultural interchange of South Asia and Southeast Asia in second millennium.

5.3 Comparative criteria:

1 Time

Myazedi Stone Inscription was inscribed by Prince Rajakumar in AD 1113. It was confirmed with evidence for paleographic system, form and content which reveals the 12th century written documents. The document reflects the socio-economic, technology, political situation and religion on 12th century AD in Myanmar.

2 Place

Myazedi Stone Inscriptions locate in Ancient Bagan City. The ancient Bagan city is situated on the east bank of Ayeyarwaddy river in the dry zone of central Myanmar. Bagan and its environment are unique place and location for cultural transformation from Proto-historic to Historic Period of Myanmar in mid-first millennium era. Bagan is the most important historical site in Myanmar. That place was setting up the trading and communicating China, India and Southeast Asia region in 12th century A.D. That place, established the capital for two and half centuries had also revealed the Myanmar empire reached the zenith of its power. Authentic history of the Myanmar dynasty begins with the accession of King Anawrahta (1044-1077) in Bagan and its environment. The Bagan cover an area of about forty-two square kilometres. There are many brick monuments remain in this area. Most of these monuments are decorated with mural paintings and stucco carvings. Also remain three side of the square city wall together with the Sarabha gate. Bagan ancient city is demarcated the cultural heritage zone; ancient monumental zone, ancient site zone, protected, and preserved zone.

In those cultural significant territory, the Kubyaugyi temple, found the Myazedi inscription locates at south of Bagan. This temple resembles the early temple type; a dark central shrine, a corridor lit by perforated stone windows and large hall with entrance facing east. This temple enshrined the gold Buddha image which Rajakumar dedicated on behalf of his father when King Kyansittha fell sick unto death. In AD 1113, after one year later death of King Kyansittha, Rajakumar set up a quadrilingual inscription and he gave a vivid account of his meritorious deed.

3 People

The Prince Rajakumar was the son of King Kyansittha and consort Thanbula. In fact Kyansittha exiled with political crisis, he met and married with Thanbula whom was a daughter of Kyaungphyu village head man. When King Kyansittha gain the throne of Bagan, Thanbula was raised as queen and the son as prince Rajakumar and lord of seven District of Dannyawadi hill regions. In circumstance, the King had already chosen his grandson (by another queen) Alaungsithu to be his immediate successor to the throne, prince Rajakumar could not become heir apparent. Though prince Rajakumar missed the chance of succession, he harboured no grudge against his father but proved a good faithful son observing filial duties. When the father grew old

and was about to die of ripe age, prince Rajakumar made a golden Buddha image and enshrined it in Kubyaukkyi temple. He donated the three villages of slave that Kyansittha give to him, to this temple and his merit, wishes and curses were inscribed on the stone. These are mainly actors in describing the stone inscription.

4 Subject and theme

Myazedi stone inscription is identified as the oldest Myanmar prose writing and literature. Concerned with the subject and theme of inscription, it was revealing and described about the faithful son of his filial duty and gratitude to his father. There are briefly retold about mention the stone inscription; *“This inscription mention that one thousand six hundred and eight years of the Buddha’s religion having elapsed, Sri Tribhuvanaditya Dhammaraj become king in the city of Arimaddanapur (Bagan). A beloved wife of that king called Trilokavatansaka-devi, and that beloved wife had a son named Rajakumar. The king gave three villages of slave to his wife. That beloved wife having died, the king gave the ornaments and the three villages of slave to her son Rajakumar. When Kyansittha felt sick unto death, Rajakumar remembering the favour wherewith the king had nourished him, made a golden Buddha, and he donated the three villages of slave that Kyansittha give to him, to the golden Buddha. After this Rajakumar took the golden Buddha, enshrine it, and built the golden –spire cave pagoda. And then his merit, wish and curse inscribed on the stone. The inscription also includes the Prince’s wish and curse. Rajakumar prays for religious dedication he made in honour of his father, “May I attain Thabinnuta (Enlightenment of Buddha hood)” then he cursed, “Those who molest or persecute three villages of labourers dedicated to the pagoda shall never see Metaya, the Next Buddha”.*

That inscription is indicated to significance and rare evidence of entirely language and literature, Buddhist religion, socio-economic status and cultural identity of Myanmar in 12th century AD.

This document covers the following themes:

- 1) Unique for quadrilingual language in Myanmar as well as Asia region.
- 2) Linguistic and language study in South India and Southeast Asia.
- 3) Buddhism and Buddhist cultural context in Myanmar.
- 4) Language and literature in Myanmar.
- 5) Date and dating
- 6) Custom and belief systems of early Myanmar

5 Form and style

Myazedi stone inscription is identified as the oldest Myanmar prose writing and literature. Sentences are short and direct in meaning. Judging by the quadrilingual nature of this inscription one may safely say that there were four languages flourishing at Bagan of that time. The writing style is systematic. The third is the syntax of the inscription is short, clear and direct in meaning. Therefore, it can describe that Rajakumar inscription is a model for others.

The nominated object is quadrilateral shape of sand stone which was prepared for using the stone inscription. In stone inscription, there are inscribed with four language in three type of scripts, namely, Myanmar, Mon and Pyu alphabets. The form of the script is not rounded. It is rectangular in shape. Comparison with paleographic study in Myazedi inscription, its intended mainly the Mon Language.

There can be observed grammar, syntax, composition in language and linguistic survey of respective languages which were described in inscription. Especially, that inscription has been revealed for language and paleographic evidences for 12th century AD. Dr. C. O. Blagden, the pioneer scholar of deciphered the Myazedi inscription observed as follow;

"I have shown that in the case of the Myazedi inscriptions the Burmese text must be regarded as the original draft on which the Mon (and 'Pyu') versions were based... The existence of the Mon and Pyu versions merely testifies to the fact that the State of Burma of those days was a composite affair...Between the Burmese and the Mons lay a tract occupied by the people who spoke the so-called "Pyu" language. Presumably these three tongues, together with Pali, were the most important written languages (the only ones, it may be) of Burma at this period, and therefore the Myazedi record was made in each of them."

6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance

6.0 Contextual information

6.1 Rarity

- Rajakumar inscription is only one inscription that inscribed the one subject in four languages in South and Southeast Asia Region. It is also very rare for four languages description in Myanmar as well as Global content. It can be compared with Rosetta Stone Inscription where was found in Egypt.
- Rajakumar inscription is the earliest inscription among the fixed date inscription.
- That inscription is the earliest dated among Myanmar Languages inscribing evidences of entirely nation.
- It is also existence evidence of Myanmar Language and its contents which has been established since 800 years ago.
- This inscription has been shown as symbol for those who follow with Buddhist belief in Buddhist devotees and followers since 800 years ago. It is also not only in regional but also in international content which is revealing the spirit and phenomena of Buddhism.

6.2 Integrity

The Myazedi stone inscription is intact, completeness and wholeness in their entirely existing remains from finding. It is an unimpaired physical condition. The inscribed texts are legible throughout.