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Dr. Maung Maung (1925-1994)



Born in Mandalay on 31 st January, 1925, of parents U Hsint, Higher Grade Pleader and Daw Aye Tin. Educated at the Buddha Sasana Nuggaha (BSN) High School, Mandalay and at the age of 14 years he passed High School Final Examination in 1939.

As he had not reached the prescribed age he had to wait one year to get official admission as a University student at the Intermediate College, Manda-

dalay. In 1941 he studied science there till World War II engulfed Myanmar. During the Japanese occupation he passed the Intermediate Examination with distinctions in English, Mathematics and Physics in 1943. Then he joined the Burma Defence Army (BDA) and was selected to attend the Military Academy at Mingaladon and later served as a Second-Lieutenant at the War Office in Yangon. In March 1945 he took part in the Resistance Movement against the Japanese in the Henzada area. After the Resistance he left the Army and returned to the Yangon University to take the Bachelor of Arts degree. In August 1946, as an external student he won the B.A degree with a distinction in English literature.

Served as a Tutor at the English Department of the Yangon University and then worked as an Editor of The New Times of Burma (Myanmar) newspaper published by the Government Information Department, and later as an Assistant Secretary at Myanma Railways. While working he studied and obtained the Bachelor of Law degree with an out-standing First position. From 1949 to 1952, as a State Scholar he studied publicity methods and journalism in London. At the same time he read for the Bar at Lincoln's Inn and was engaged in doctoral studies in International law at the University of Utrecht, The Hague in the Netherlands.

After returning home from England, he was employed as a Legal Officer in the Attorney-General's Office in 1953. He also was a Co-founder and an Editor of The Guardian, a monthly English-language magazine and The Guardian, a daily English language newspaper. In 1955 he left government service and established his own law firm. In July 1956 he earned the LL.D.

(Doctorate in Law) degree from the University of Utrecht. From 1958-1959 he was appointed as the Assistant Attorney-General by the Caretaker Government led by General Ne Win. He then worked as a Visiting Lecturer in Political Science and Asia Studies at Yale University, New Haven in USA from 1960-1962. During his stay at Yale he wrote two significant books- A Trial in Burma, and Aung San of Burma. He was also conferred the J.S.D (Doctor of Juridical Science) degree in 1962 by the Yale University.

After the Revolutionary Council led by General Ne Win took over state power, he returned to Myanmar and became a Judge of High Court on 11th July 1962 and the Chief Justice in 1965. From 1971 to 1974 he was a Member of Revolutionary Council and Minister for Judicial Affairs. He also served as a Member of Commission to draft a new constitution for Myanmar. From 1974-1988 he was chosen as a Member of the Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Assembly) and a Member of the Council of State. On 18th August 1988 he was elected as the Chairman and President of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Myanmar. On 18th September 1988 he retired when the military coup took place.

As a brilliant scholar and a renowned Jurist he wrote many articles, essays, profiles, travelogues, papers and books on history, politics, military, law and various other subjects in English and Myanmar. Among them some of his work in English are The Forgotten Army (1946), Burma's Teething Time (1949), London Diary (1952), Grim War against the KMT (1953), Burma in the Family of Nations (1956), Burma's Constitution (1959), A Trial in Burma (1962), Aung San of Burma (1962), Law and Custom in Burma and the Burmese Family (1963), Burma and General Ne Win (1969), To a Soldier Son (1974) and The 1988 Uprising in Myanmar (1999).

At the age of sixty-nine he passed away of a heart attack in Yangon on 2nd July 1994.