



Press Release

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Blue Plaque unveils at Bogyoke Aung San Market

YANGON: Yangon Heritage Trust's 16th commemorative Blue Plaque was unveiled today at Bogyoke Aung San Market which is located on Bogyoke Aung San Street (formerly Commissioner Road).

Since its opening in 1926, Bogyoke Market has been a place for Yangon residents to shop the latest fashion materials, art supplies, souvenirs and a place to hang out for leisure. Nowadays, it is not only an important marketplace for the city residents but also an attraction for international tourists.

According to historical records, the first municipal market was established in Botahtaung soon after the British took control of Yangon in 1852. However, compared to private markets such as Suratee Bazaar (later Theingyi Market) established in 1853 and Bogalay Market, the municipal market was not a success. In 1876, another municipal market was opened on the Strand Road, between Shwebontha Street (formerly Moghul Street) and Shwedagon Pagoda Road (China Street).

In 1904, Rangoon Port Commissioners planned to extend their wharfs by linking up the Sule Pagoda wharfs with the new wharf, which was being built at the Latter Street (later Latha Street), but the plan was held up by a dispute with the Municipality about the plot of the market. After lengthy negotiations, an agreement was reached in 1920 that the site should be sold and the market be relocated to Commissioner Road. The new market was built by well-known contractor A. C. Martin & Co. Until the new market was completed, the municipal continued to occupy the Strand site as tenants. In 1926, the new market, named after Municipal Commissioner Gavin Scott as Scott Market, was opened.

The Founder and Chairman of Yangon Heritage Trust, Dr Thant Myint-U, reminisced "One of my earliest things I remember about Yangon is shopping at Scott Market for a paso after arriving from New York in 1974. I think for many people who have grown up in Yangon, it's a place of many memories, layered on top of one another."

"As big shopping malls become a bigger part of the landscape, the market will be that much more special, a place of memory and desire, a place where amidst all the change, a living link to the past remains, almost as it always was," he said.

2016 marked 90 years since its opening and as an important heritage building in central area of the city, Bogyoke Aung San Market requires systematic and careful preservation.

Dr Thant Myint-U continued "It's an incredibly successful heritage site. It's retained its essence whilst also adapting. It's the city's second most important visitor attraction whilst also being important for residents. It can be an anchor for downtown revitalization. We have to be very careful to protect this priceless asset, from inappropriate renovations, from inappropriate development nearby (such as any road expansion), and from fire and other hazards."

During the Japanese occupation, the market was renamed as Yan Naing Market after one of the Thirty Comrades, Bo Yan Naing. After the Independence, the name of the market was changed to Bogyoke Aung San Market to commemorate the Independence hero, General Aung San.

The commemorative Blue Plaque is a part of Yangon Heritage Trust's efforts to highlight historical buildings and renowned residents who contributed to the narrative of the city. YHT believes that the introduction of commemorative Blue Plaques will make Yangon's history accessible to people of all age and backgrounds.

Royal Philips agreed to contribute US\$ 75,000 for the Yangon Blue Plaques initiative. Aside from the highlighting key cultural heritage locations, the contribution will also support the research and curation of historical sites, and creation and installation of Blue Plaques that will share the historical relevance and background of notable people and places across the city.

Yangon Heritage Trust is an independent centre of excellence working to promote and integrate Yangon's unique urban heritage into a 21st century vision of Yangon as one of Asia's most liveable cities. Yangon Heritage Trust advocates for heritage protection, develops clear and sustainable policy options, engages with government, business and civil society, communicates its ideas to the widest possible audience, undertakes specific conservation projects, and facilitates research and training.

For more information on Yangon Heritage Trust:

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