

Hla Chit (1938–1997)

TIMOTHY MUNA PAUL

Timothy Muna Paul, M.A. in religion (Spicer Memorial College, India), has served as a pastor and administrator since 1983. Currently he is president of Myanmar Union Mission. He is married to Daw Cho Cho David and has a daughter and twin sons.

Hla Chit was an Adventist evangelist and church administrator in Myanmar.

Early Life, Education, and Marriage

Hla Chit was born on April 1, 1938, to U Doe Doe and Daw Pu at Aungkone Village, Phyapon Township, Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar. The Doe Does had six children: Hla Chit, Alda, Rainbow, Winter, Shelly, and Silas. Hla Chit got baptized in 1950.¹

Hla Chit spent his childhood life in the Aung Gone village, and it was here that he obtained his elementary education. Then he enrolled to Myaungmya Seventh-day Adventist High School and spend his educational endeavor in the years of 1953-1957; and he also studied at Kyauktaing Seventh-day Adventist High School during 1957-1959. Hla Chit completed his academic work in Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary (formerly, Union Bible Seminary) during the years of 1960 and 1961 and earned the Ministerial Training Certificate.² Hla Chit married Helen Chit on February 18, 1971. The Chits were blessed with three sons and three daughters: Saw Lay Wah, Eh Paw Wah, Khu Shee Wah, Say Khu Wah, Htee Khu Wah, and Khu Paw Wah.³

Ministry

He entered the ministerial service as an evangelist in Yangon SDA Central Church and worked there in the years of 1962-1964 as an assistant church pastor. It was in May 1964 that the assistant pastor of Yangon Central SDA Church, Hla Chit, was sent to Kan Bauk, a mining area in the Southern Peninsula of Myanmar, which is 50 miles from Dawei City. He was using a unique method of evangelism by playing the accordion to attract those people who passed by his house from their work. The people approached to listen to the music, then he started preaching the Word. As a result, U Aung Pe was one of those converts by Hla Chit with his own method of evangelism.⁴ From 1965 to 1976, Hla Chit served as an evangelist at Htee Pha Do SDA Church in the South East Asia Mission (formerly known as Tenassarim).

In 1974 an old English exmilitary serviceman called Herbert Halden, who lived deep in the jungle five miles off the Mawlamyine-Dawei highway, subscribed to the *Signs* magazine and a Bible-study series from North America. But the *Signs* subscription went to a Burmese Adventist minister called Elijah Bwint. With Hla Chit, they

went to the deep jungle, and in the midst of jungle crossroads they lost their way, but at last they reached Halden and delivered the *Signs* copies. As the isolated English family gladly received them, they erected the Signs (ital.)pulpit.⁵

Hla Chit got ordained to the gospel ministry on December 18, 1974, and then he became the mission departmental director at Mawlamyine (formerly known as Moulmein) in the years of 1977 and 1978.⁶ Then from the years of 1979-1982, he served as the Yangon district administrator. Then he became the president of Central Myanmar, and served there from 1983 to 1989.⁷ And his service record was moved to the Myanmar Union Mission of SDAs as he became an associate Union Church Ministerial director as well as the youth ministerial director in the years of 1990-1992.⁸

Later Life

After decades of serving in the ministries of the Lord, he officially retired from the ministry in April 1992.⁹ His health started seriously declining in 1993, and he died on March 13, 1997.¹⁰ Hla Chit is particularly remembered for his music ministry and impact on young people.

SOURCES

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Workers Service Record of Hla Chit. Southern Asia-Pacific Division Archives, Silang Cavite, Philippines.

NOTES

1. Saw Lay Wah, eldest child of Hla Chit, interview by the author, January 14, 2017.

2. Ibid.

3. Workers Service Record of Hla Chit, retained in the File of Employing Organization.

4. W. L. Murrill, "Burma Pushes Frontiers with New Methods," *Southern Asia Tidings*, September 1964, 4.

5. T. R. Torkelson, "100,000 More Pupils in 100th Year," *Pacific Union Recorder*, May 1974, 1, 8.
 6. W.L. Murrill, "Burma Pushes Frontiers with New Methods," *Southern Asia Tidings*, 4. *Southern Asia Tidings*, September 1964, 4.
 7. Burma Union Committee Minutes, Action No. 82-204.
 8. MYUM Committee Minutes, Action No. 89-232.
 9. Workers Service Record of Hla Chit, Retained in the File of the Employing Organization.
 10. Saw Timothy Munna Paul, personal knowledge of Hla Chit's life and ministry.
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