

Tin Tun Shin (1939–2018)

MORRIS CHIT

Morris Chit, M.A. and Ed. S. in education, is the director of education of Myanmar Union Mission and former executive secretary of South East Mission in Myanmar.

Tin Tun Shin was a leader of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Myanmar.

Early Life

Tin Tun Shin was born November 12, 1939, in Yangon Women's Hospital in Alone, Burma (now Myanmar)¹ His parents were U Yan Shin and Daw Mai Zin, belonging to the Karen tribe. His father was a Baptist and his mother was a Seventh-day Adventist. They lived in Lawkar Village, Yangon Region. His father was a police officer. He had two siblings, Doe Doe Shin and Rita Zan. Doe Doe Shin was a Kinsaung Press manager and Rita Zan was an office secretary to the president of the Myanmar Union Mission. They all served the Seventh-day Adventist Church until their retirement.

Education and Marriage

Tin Tun Shin went to the Miss Gifford English School in Yangon from kindergarten through grade 6. After that he transferred to the government school in Alone. He studied there from grade 7 through 10. He studied hard and at night he worked in the reception department in the Yangon Seventh-day Adventist Hospital. He passed the grade 10 examination in one year. He was spiritually strong and wished to serve God, but his brother wanted him to work as a health assistant in a government hospital. In those days in Myanmar, Sabbath was a school day. Tin Tun Shin wanted to go to Spicer Memorial College in India after he passed grade 10 because he did not want to break the Sabbath.² He worked in the Yangon Seventh-day Adventist Hospital as a registrar from 1958 to 1960.

The church leaders then were looking for young people who could lead the Myanmar Union Mission evangelistic work. They found out Tin Tun Shin was willing to go for further study at Spicer Memorial College in India. In 1961, Myanmar Union Mission sent him to Spicer Memorial College and he finished his Bachelor of Theology degree in 1964.³ He married Naw Hla May Tin on April 10, 1967, in Yangon. Their children, Pency Tun and Mi Mi Tun, were born in 1968, and Richard Tun was born in 1970.⁴ They have two grandchildren living in the United States.

Ministry

Tin Tun Shin was a very spiritual person with a keen desire to serve the church. When he finished high school he worked in the Yangon Seventh-day Adventist Hospital from 1958 to 1960. After four years of study at Spicer Memorial College, he returned to Myanmar and served as a school teacher at Taungngu High School from 1964 to 1966. In 1967, he was transferred to Union Bible Seminary to teach religious subjects for three years. In 1970 he was appointed as an evangelist in Pathein, Ayeyarwaddy Mission for two years. After that he became principal of Ohn Daw Bible Seminary in South East Mission from 1972 to 1974.⁵ In 1975 he began 19 years as an instructor at the Union Bible Seminary.

He was ordained to the gospel ministry on January 1, 1977.⁶ In 1989, Myanmar Union Mission Committee chose him to study at the Adventist University of the Philippines. He received two degrees, Master of Pastoral Theology and Master of Arts in Teaching.⁷

He returned to Myanmar in 1991 and served as an instructor at the Union Bible Seminary for three years.⁸ In 1994, he was elected as president of the Ayeyarwaddy Mission⁹ by the Myanmar Union Mission nominating committee and started serving in that position on April 1, 1994.¹⁰ He served as Ayeyarwaddy Mission president for six years, until 2000.¹¹ Then he was elected as president of the Myanmar Union Mission in 2000.¹²

Later Life

On March 1, 2004, he retired from church employment¹³ and settled down in Hpa-an, Kayin state. He died in his home on November 28, 2018, at the age of 81.¹⁴

Legacy

Tin Tun Shin made many contributions to the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Myanmar. He wrote project proposals, led evangelistic crusades, constructed house church buildings and schools, and acquired evangelistic equipment.¹⁵ He submitted proposals to Mr. McNeilus of the United States for house-church projects in the union. He supported workers' professional development as he encouraged them to attend summer school at Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary¹⁶ and the Master of Arts in Education program of Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in Yangon.¹⁷ He also sent young people from his mission to attend vocational training where they learned sewing and carpentry in Tarbay, Taungngu.¹⁸ He worked with Dr. Lee, the Northern Asia-Pacific Division president, on the 1000 Missionary Movement projects in Myanmar. He promoted the English language speaking program when he was an instructor in the Union Bible Seminary.¹⁹

Ayeyawaddy Mission Committee Minutes, 1995-012; 1996-076; 1996-077. Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing.

Association, 1972.

Myanmar Union Committee Minutes, 1994-018; 1994-056; 1994-064. Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

Myanmar Union Annual Council Minutes, 2000-209. Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

Workers' Service Records. Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

NOTES

1. Workers' Service Record, Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.
2. Interviews with Rita Zan, sister of Tin Tun Shin, by Morris Chit, August 3, 2019, in Yangon.
3. Personal Workers' Service Record, Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1972.
7. Personal Workers' Service Record, Archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.
8. Ibid.
9. Myanmar Union Mission Executive Committee Minutes, 1994-018, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.
10. Ibid. 1994-056, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.
11. Workers' Service Record, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.
12. Myanmar Union Annual Council Minutes, 2000-209, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.
13. Personal Workers' Service Record, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

14. Ibid.

15. Myanmar Union Mission Executive Committee Minutes, 1994-064, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

16. Ayeyawaddy Mission Committee Minutes, 1995-012, archive in the office of Myanmar Union Mission, Dagon, Myanmar.

17. Ibid. 1996-076.

18. Ibid. 1996-077.

19. Interview with Rita Zan by Morris Chit, August 3, 2019, in Yangon.

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