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DVB Debate is produced by DVB Multimedia Group Ltd. Co. The debate is recorded every Saturday morning in Yangon with a live audience, which is invited to join the discussion as well.

 DVB TV		DVB RADIO	
Sunday	7.15 pm	Saturday	Evenings
Monday	1.15 am / 7.15 am / 1.15 pm	Sunday	Mornings
Wednesday	8.45 pm	DVB ONLINE	
Thursday	2.45 am / 8.45 am / 2.45 pm	dvbdebate.com	24/7
Friday	8.45 pm	facebook.com/ dvb.debate	
Saturday	2.45 am / 8.45 am / 2.45 pm	twitter @dvbdebate	

DVB Debate aims to contribute to a new culture of open debate, in which anyone can participate and agree to disagree, in order to exchange ideas, create better mutual understanding and find solutions for societal issues to improve the future of Myanmar.

The team invites fellow media and debating clubs to join this initiative for open debate. A weekly press release, press picture and cartoon are available shortly after the recording. DVB Debate also has a modest budget to support local debating initiatives.

For any inquiries, remarks or questions, please call 01292743 (office hours), leave a comment on facebook.com/dvb.debate or email debate@dvb.no.

DVB DEBATE



Welcome to DVB Debate,
Myanmar's 1st open debate program.

This week's debate question is:

Should love have rules?

If you have any remarks, suggestions or questions,
please ask a team member,
call 01292743 (office hours) or email debate@dvb.no.

This week's topic is ALL ABOUT LOVE

Historical context:

Despite a conservative Buddhist society, traditional attitudes towards love and marriage in Burma are more relaxed than in other countries in the region. Traditional Burmese folklore considers love to be destiny and a marriage can be recognized without a ceremony. Arranged marriage is not really a custom, and where to some extent, arranged marriages have been part of Burmese tradition the women have the right to refuse the offer. However, in recent months a proposal to ban inter-faith marriage in Myanmar has been brought before parliament. The proposed law would require Buddhist women to obtain permission from their parents and local officials if they wished to marry a Muslim. And there are other legal restrictions in matters of the heart. Homosexuality is outlawed under Section 377 of the country's penal code. Like many of Burma's criminal laws, this law is a direct legacy of British rule, part of the Indian penal code 1860. There is no legal protection for LGBT people in Burma, who face widespread social discrimination and police persecution.

Facts & figures:

- Homosexual sex is effectively outlawed under section 377 of the Penal Code, which carries a sentence between 10 years and life imprisonment.
- Other charges that may be brought against LGBT include negligently spreading sexual disease (Sections 269 and 270); committing a public nuisance (Section 290); or the Emergency Provisions Act (section 5j) which bans any activity that may "affect the morality" of an individual or society in a negative way.
- Myo Min Htet and Tin Ko Ko celebrated their ten year anniversary on March 2nd 2014 with Burma's first public (unofficial) gay marriage ceremony.
- Draft legislation to ban marriage between Buddhist women and Muslim men was first announced in June 2013 after a conference of monks in Yangon
- Nationalist monk U Wirathu said in January that a petition in favour of an interfaith marriage ban had collected more than three million signatures

Points of view:

In a proposal to the parliament Myanmar's President, **Thein Sein**, asked parliament to consider some form of intermarriage law "to give protection and rights for ethnic Buddhists when marrying with other religions"

Aung San Suu Kyi has called the proposed interfaith marriage ban "a violation of women's rights and human rights"

"The [interfaith marriage] law is necessary because our Buddhist women are not intelligent or educated enough to protect themselves." (**U Maung Maung**, Theravada Dharma Network)

"It is shocking that Burma is considering enshrining blatant discrimination at the heart of Burmese family law. This law would strip away from women their right to freely decide whom to marry, and would mark a major reversal for religious freedom and women's rights in Burma." (**Brad Adams**, Human Right Watch)

The **United Nations** says laws against homosexuality hinder progress against HIV and AIDS.

"Our Buddhism doesn't allow [homosexuality]. It's not appropriate naturally. ...We should outlaw it extensively," (**U Pamoukka**, Magway Monastery)

"People still believe LGBT people are second class, so many people give priority to national issues like the constitution and law... We have to educate people that these are not special rights, they are human rights." (**Aung Myo Min**, Gay rights activist)

Information links:

www.colorsrainbow.com

www.hreib.com

www.hrw.org/asia/burma

www.burmalibrary.org/docs6/MYANMAR_PENAL_CODE-corr.1.pdf

www.buddhanet.net

www.dvb.no