Yangon and Bagan, Two Beautiful Places in Myanmar

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When I saw the advertisement of Biman-Bangladesh Airlines in the newspaper saying that they were opening a new route Dhaka-Yangon-Dhaka from 9th December, 2013, I decided to go on a short trip to Myanmar. After an hour and a half, we were at Yangon airport - modern, very clean and surprisingly not crowded. We proceeded to the immigration counter. The officer spoke good English and was very courteous. Then we proceeded to the customs. Interestingly, at customs, my wife had to sign a declaration describing the kind of jewellery she was carrying into Myanmar and the customs officer told my wife that she had to show her jewellery when exiting. This was a little strange to us as it is not done in any airport around the world. We remember, in the 1960s, we had to declare our cameras or any electronic gadgets while entering India. Anyway, the declaration was then signed and stamped. While returning, however, nobody asked my wife about that form!



Yangon City Street.



Temple in Bagan.

We were received at the Yangon airport by our host, a friend we hadn't met for a long time. She took us to their home in the city. Her husband is a Bangladeshi colleague of mine from years ago, who now works in Myanmar in a Microfinance organisation. Both of them along with their two children have been living in Myanmar for the last 15 years. We had a great time visiting them in their beautiful home, learning from their stories and experiences in Myanmar. One of the most interesting stories was that in Myanmar, father's properties were distributed equally among the children, both male and female; the men move to the homes of the women after getting married. The women, moreover, were richer than the men.

From the airport to their home, the twenty minute journey by car was comfortable. The roads were not very broad, 4 lanes outside the city, then two lanes, but clean and well maintained. There were not many people or cars on the roads. As the national dress of Myanmar is 'Lonji' (lungi), it was fun to observe that many wore lungis with shirts tucked in. They wear more expensive lonji and shirts for formal functions. Women wore lonji like long skirts with blouses. Of course, there were many who were wearing European clothes - trousers, shirts, skirts and jackets.

One of the most refreshing elements of the