

U Tayzadipati:

“Influence of religious leaders on the communities lead to conflicts”

The world did not start religion. Religions evolved with time and the development of human species. The same goes to Myanmar where human existed ahead of religions. All the practices, traditions and norms were already in place in accordance with geography and demography. But later standards and ethics of life-styles, eating habit, and even marriage were replaced by religious based values.

I would like to raise the voices of the leaders and followers of each religion to discuss in deep and sound whether there should be any role of religion in and its dominance on marriage practices.

Even Buddha, Jesus and Mohammad were born and raised in families who followed the traditional practices. In my opinion, therefore, religions should only concern with spiritual and moral dimensions. The physical and social sectors should get along with the rules and laws of non-religious society based values.

However, the religious rules distort the “Becoming One” of the two lovers with different beliefs. Such enormous influence of religions had been stuck in human world for ages and ages. Marriage is the business of only two people and laws for divorce; heritage should be based only on social perspectives. If there should be one Law of Marriage, every citizen practicing different beliefs must be able to follow and to do so, it should be fair and square, and discussed thoroughly with multi-dimensional approach among all religions.

There should not be Law of Marriage based on religious paths. All religious leaders must walk together by cracking down the silent bond between marriage and religion which is very sensitive to discuss. If we can make the very first move, it can deescalate the conflicts of now-a-day rooted from ethnicity and religion, and lead us to free, fair and peaceful co-existence and development.

It is the religion to teach and make a practice how to behave, take responsibility and be peaceful to the followers from the aspects of morality and spirituality. Increasing numbers of psychiatric clinics and psycho-therapists these days highlights religions do not meet with the need of fast growing today’s world. Each religion teaches the Good Things and the Bad Things but the common ground for realizing them is different. Therefore, there should be yard sticks to measure the commonly agreed things among the community. Those things should be found out together. Success of defining our common ground rules depends on the will of religious leaders to do so and how much they are flexible and open-minded.

Another important thing is, shall we go on continuing discussing the custom that are not fit for time and situation of the current days? Or shall we find all possible ways where we can discuss, debate and agree with negotiation?

I want to discuss about for how much extent does the religion impact on marriage.

Myanmar has four main religions and other minors too. Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism have internal separate religious sect. For example, Shwe-Kyin, Sudhamma Sect. in Buddhism; Baptist, Anglican, Catholics in Christianity; and Sunni and Shiite among Muslims are can be seen.

The point here is, in Myanmar, Multi-ethnicities and religions co-existed like in other countries. But hardly can it be seen like in Yangon where Sule Pagoda, mosque, Immanuel Church, and Hindu Temple are standing next-to-next. Myanmar is like a unique garden where different beliefs blossom beautifully. I have no idea of when those religions are first recorded in the history but all of them were not Myanmar origin. They all came from foreign countries many years ago.

Myanmar has its own different cultures varying on places since before the arrival of religions. Each culture had its own strong ground of how to heir, wed, and act in each society. That is how our human species evolve and develop over time to time with values to values. That is our way of survival. It also must be true to every society, race, ethnic group, village, town, city and county.

When a religion was introduced to a society, it has impacts of both measurable and immeasurable on society, community, culture, food, literature and marriage, by integrating with and influencing on pre-existing ones. That is what we need to think and discuss while we are trying of figure out the current problems in Myanmar.

We need to focus on the how much extent of which impacts are on our secular communities. But it is also important to discuss those things among the same religious groups first and then among different groups. I have great hopes on such discussions because I believe it can promote and improve the women's rights at the same time.

Why do religious leaders want to involve or intervene in the marriage?

Marriage is the expansion and fulfilling of human duty for the growth, not merely for preserving of his own. Instead of that, do religious leaders believe marriage is for the sustainable development of religion? Or fundamental duty of a person is for handover of religious duties?

Religious groups first intervened the marriage but later they tried to dominant and finally they fully took control of it, assuming humans as religious servants.

Why and how does it happen?

Does the belief that "religions teach us the merit of humans" turn into a belief that "everything is under the hands of religious leaders"? Or are the religious leaders judging each person's destiny?

Such belief may promote the role of religious leaders as the decision-makers of humanity. I just want you to think about it and discuss with each and everyone from different religions.

Translated by Soe Tun Kyi