

News

DO YOU HAVE A STORY?

Are you doing or have done something the community might be interested in or do you want to tell us about your achievements? If so call 07 348 6199 ext 57032 or email imogen.orisp@dailypost.co.nz. The Daily Post offices 1143 Hinemoa St.

Similarity, difference part of settling in

Khin Cho Oo from Burma finds Rotorua people friendly and she has found the organisations to help new migrants very helpful. Cho moved to Rotorua just over a year ago.

She moved to New Zealand four years ago with her son and her husband who first got a job as a surgeon in Whangarei.

Then he got a job with Lakes District Health Board and they moved to Rotorua.

She first left Burma, also known as the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, seven years ago and moved to the United Kingdom with her husband.

Burma is in Southeast Asia and borders China, Laos, Thailand, Bangladesh and India with the coast on the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea.

Cho was born and brought up in Yangon in southern Burma which is the largest city in the country with a population of five million.

She says Yangon used to be the capital of Burma, but in 2005 it was moved to a more central city called Naypyidaw.

Cho says even though Yangon is no longer the capital, it is still "the main gateway to Burma". "Nobody goes to the new town."

She says there is an international airport in Yangon and the city is still the main business hub. "It is a very busy city, lots of people and lots of commercial centres."



SETTLED: Khin Cho Oo from Burma says she is settled in Rotorua thanks to help from friends and Settlement Support.

PICTURE: ANDREW WARNER

She says there are also lots of restaurants and hotels.

Cho says in Burma there are three seasons: summer season, rainy season and a cold season.

She says the hot and humid summer temperatures in New Zealand are similar to the climate

in Burma. The terrain varies from hilly in the mountainous regions, to beaches along the coast, Cho says.

She says one of the main industries in Burma is the export of natural resources like gold, gems and timber. Also food export

like fresh water fish, prawns and agriculture.

She says the fresh water fish are very different from salt water fish.

"They are very sweet."

In Burma, Cho says the food is similar to Indian and Chinese food, the principal food is rice, then they eat curry, soup, salad, fish and meat.

The main religion of Burma is Buddhism and Cho says there are lots of interesting Buddhist pagodas and temples which attract tourists to the country.

She says tourists also come to see the wildlife and the rainforests.

Cho says the main annual celebration in Burma is the Water Festival which celebrates the new year.

"It is celebrated by throwing water at one another."

During the festival the whole country has a public holiday for a few days.

Cho says the main basic element of Burmese culture is close kinship.

People respect, love and support their families.



MAP: Burma in Southeast Asia.

"Children are taught to respect their parents."

Cho says children look after their parents when they get older, and rest homes are not popular in Burma as they are in New Zealand.

She says there are also similarities between New Zealand and Burmese culture, with people supporting each other.

"People are friendly, the same. Neighbourhood support is very important in our country."

But Cho says when she and her family first arrived in Rotorua they felt lonely, but they have now made friends and settled in, with the help of Rotorua Settlement Support.

She says the family likes Rotorua.

"We like Rotorua because it is a tourist attraction place."

"I meet many friends of different nationalities."

■ Cho will be speaking at the Neighbours in Our Community meeting on Friday August 26 at 12pm at Rotorua Arts Village, Hinemaru St.

The Daily Post is available at the following cafes at lunchtime every day!

