

## PUBLIC FORUM

### Unearthed Story of Myanmar History

**Date & Time:** 13:00 - 15:00 Saturday, September 17, 2005

**Venue:** ACROS Fukuoka Event Hall

**Participants:** Approximately 120

**1 Theme:** "Preserve Palm-leaves in Digital Format"

**2 Program:** Outline of the Forum and Introduction of Speakers

Professor Ishizawa Yoshiaki (President, Sophia University)

Keynote Speech

Dr. Thaw Kaung (Academic Prize Laureate)

Speeches

Emeritus Professor Okudaira Ryuji (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Professor Saito Teruko (Faculty of Foreign Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)

Professor Ito Toshikatsu (Faculty of Letters, Aichi University)

### 3 Outline:

Dr. Thaw Kaung illustrated different types of traditional manuscripts, the process of how the palm-leaf is made, and the ways of conservation and repair by showing visual images at his keynote speech. He explained that palm-leaf manuscripts and other old documents now face almost certain destruction and have to be preserved. "Only by conserving our intellectual history recorded in our traditional manuscripts, we will be able to preserve the indigenous scholarship of our countries that forms an essential part of our national, as well as Asian culture." he said.

Professor Okudaira then followed. He said that the old documents are the fruit of intelligence produced in the natural environment and people's life to explain how old documents have changed with the lapse of time and their historical background in Myanmar.

Professor Saito, showing the images of actually digitalized old documents, explained the specific interpretation on each of the images. She said that old documents are valuable to learn the life, custom and culture of people in relevant times.

On opening the website he releases the database of Myanmar socio-economic history, Professor Ito defined the significance of the digitalization by saying that digitalization of traditional texts enables us to preserve them for a long time and in the future, to utilize the data throughout the world in the form of Internet and other media means.

Finally, Professor Ishizawa concluded the forum by commenting that the preservation of old documents is to preserve historical legacy of intelligence, which is actually to protect the culture of Asia.

