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Films shed light on pressing digital rights issues in Myanmar

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To commemorate the International Human Rights Day, EngageMedia, along with the [Myanmar ICT for Development Organization \(MIDO\)](#) and [Phandeeyar Innovation Lab](#), organised a film screening and discussion on 16 December 2018 in Yangon. It featured two remarkable short films that showcased the everyday struggles of Myanmar people in fully exercising their human rights online.



This event is a culmination of our collaboration with the movement behind the Myanmar Digital Rights Forum (#digitalrightsMM); bringing in amazing local film-makers: the award-winning Kyal Yi Lin Six and up-and-coming animation and graphic design start-up **JOOSK Studios**.

“This digital rights film collaboration project channels the power of films to effect change on digital rights, not just for Myanmar people but for all peoples in Southeast Asia,” said Yatanar Htun of MIDO.

Are We Ready?

“**Are You Ready?**” is a film produced by animation and graphic design start-up JOOSK Studios. It narrates how the Article 66(D) of the 2013 Telecommunications Law has been continuously used by military people and political parties to silence critics and dissenters of the government.



“There have been no effective changes even though Telecommunications Law was amended in 2017. But there were more than 70 cases under the law. **Are You Ready?** reflects the impact of Article 66(d) and it is very helpful to the Telecommunications Law amendment campaigns,” said Maung Saung Kha, who was among those who were arrested in 2015 under Article 66(D) for creating and publishing a poem online. He founded Athan, an activist organisation that forwards freedom of expression for the Myanmar people, that just recently won the Human Rights Tulip Award.

It's Time to Talk

Directed by award-winning film-maker Kyal Yi Lin Six, “**It's Time to Talk**” visits a day in a life of a female journalist, a Punjabi student-activist and a transgender woman who all have experienced harassment in digital platforms. The film tackles how presumed safe spaces online have become areas for discrimination and harassment.

The next public screening of the two short films will be during the Myanmar Digital Rights Forum in January 2019. Registration for the Forum can be accessed [here](#). Deadline is on 31 December 2018.



It also outlines possible steps to combat cyber harassment: from changing privacy and account settings on digital platforms to urging key actors to push for changes in culture and behaviour.

Myanmar's Fight for democracy & free speech

"This event is to remind everyone that there are human rights issues that we're all facing when we use the Internet and that we should all work together to address them," says Ei Myat Noe Khin, Phandeeyar's Digital Rights Manager.



The event, along with the films, hopes to raise public awareness, empower people to speak of their struggles in exercising their human rights online and mobilise more people to call for the immediate attention of the Myanmar government in upholding human rights online and offline.

The film launch event also comes at a critical time, as free speech advocates continue to call for the immediate release of Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, who covered the massacre of Rohingya Muslims, a year after their arrest.

*This film project was made possible by a project grant from **the Association for Progressive Communications (APC)** and **the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)**.*

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