

# Today popular hair dressing style on Facebook



Photo: Facebook page of presidential office

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When General U Win Myit went to the 32nd ASEAN Summit in Singapore, a photos of his wife and other state leaders sending him to the airport spread on Facebook. For the first time a picture of a women sending U Win Myit to the airport became the center of attention. It was about the clothing choice of Mr. President's wife, the First Lady.

Next to a very smartly dressed General U Win Myit, the first lady had simply dressed her hair with a comb and put Thanakha on her face. She was wearing a Myanmar jacket with an overlapping flap, and wore a thin veil on her shoulder, she was wearing Burmese fabric Longie and velvet flip flops. Some people loved and some people criticized Daw Cho Cho's fashion. Her dress was criticized as unfashionable, some said the first lady of Myanmar should be dressed properly.

Different people have different ideas of beauty. Some people like her simple style but compared to international fashion some people did not like it. Different people have always had

different views on her fashion. In this case, what we want to discuss is not her sense of style. What we mainly want to discuss is why women face criticism based on their physical appearance when they take a role in leadership.

People think that leaders of the country should be smart and look smart. If female leader's dress nice and smart would they then be free from criticism? No, they are not free from the criticism. For example State Counselor Daw Aung San Su Gyi, who is wise and intelligent, still had to face criticism. Especially her way of dressing, which became a main discussion topic.

A decade ago under the military dictatorship, there was a book that criticized Daw Aung San Su Gyi sense of style to condemn and fight against NLD party which was led by her.

Was it against the military dictatorship? No it was not. Even among politicians, different outlook on policy, counterinsurgency, journalists and ordinary people, if they want to speak against Day Aung San Su Gyi they just point at her outfit.

Based on this view, people might respond that it's common for leaders to face criticism. Men also like to have their own fashion style. For example, bald men cover the bald area with the hair they have with an overcomb, because they know bald heads don't look nice. There are people who like fashion, but say that the society limits male fashion to only shoes, trousers, Longie, Myanmar jacket, watches and rings. However, not many people criticize the fashion of men. If the leader is a man, Myanmar jacket with Longie, coat with trousers is enough and look smart for the society and people do not even talk about it. However, if the leader is a women, they carefully watch the outfit and criticized every detail of it.

"Among the competitors, they might use this point as a main weapon to criticize each other. For example, even wearing

normal Burmese traditional custom, they might want to know how much it is cost, or criticize a woman's outfit if the style does not match with their age, if the fashion is too simple or too old and if it does not look smart."

Criticisms on beauty and fashion are a weapon used to disturb female leaders, but it does not happen with men leader. For women in leadership roles, criticism of their appearance is a serious challenge. Dressing badly is like dropping a drop of poison into a cup of honey.

Ordinary women might see that this kind of criticism as nothing, it does not disturb them. But when they become leaders it becomes more destructive.

With these double standards in society, women leaders dressing style or living style is a constant topic of discussion and hate. It obviously points at the inequality between men and women in the society.

Unfortunately, gender inequality in Myanmar is still a huge challenges for women to reach leadership positions.

An overview on women, particularly women who are leaders should be the same as men in terms of capability. The society's personal prospective should be to avoid judging both men and women on anything other than their leadership qualities.

The society should judge first Lady Daw Cho Cho in the same ways other countries' first ladies are judged – on how would she develop the country in term of social, educational, and other political areas together with Mr. President. Otherwise, if a person is judge based on the physical appearance rather than attitude and abilities, we will not progress as a society.

The question is "what is wrong with First Lady Daw Cho Cho dressing her hair with comb?"

