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A road for all nations

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The classy Jalan U-Thant is host to various foreign embassies

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THE quaint road that is home to various foreign embassies is aptly named after the man who had spent years in international relations as the secretary-general of the United Nations.

Just a stone's throw away from Jalan Ampang, Jalan U-Thant plays host to buildings like the Iranian embassy, the Iraqi embassy as well as various luxury residential properties.

U Thant was born in Pantanaw, Burma now Myanmar, on Jan 22, 1909 and was educated at the National High School in Pantanaw. He went on to pursue his tertiary qualifications at the University College, Rangoon.

He then ventured into educational, research and information work and started off as a senior master of his alma mater, and in 1931, he took on the post of a headmaster after securing first place in the Anglo-Vernacular Secondary Teachers Examination.

Apart from being a member of the Burma's Textbook Committee

and of the Council of National Education before the Second World War broke out, he was also the executive committee member of the Heads of Schools Association.

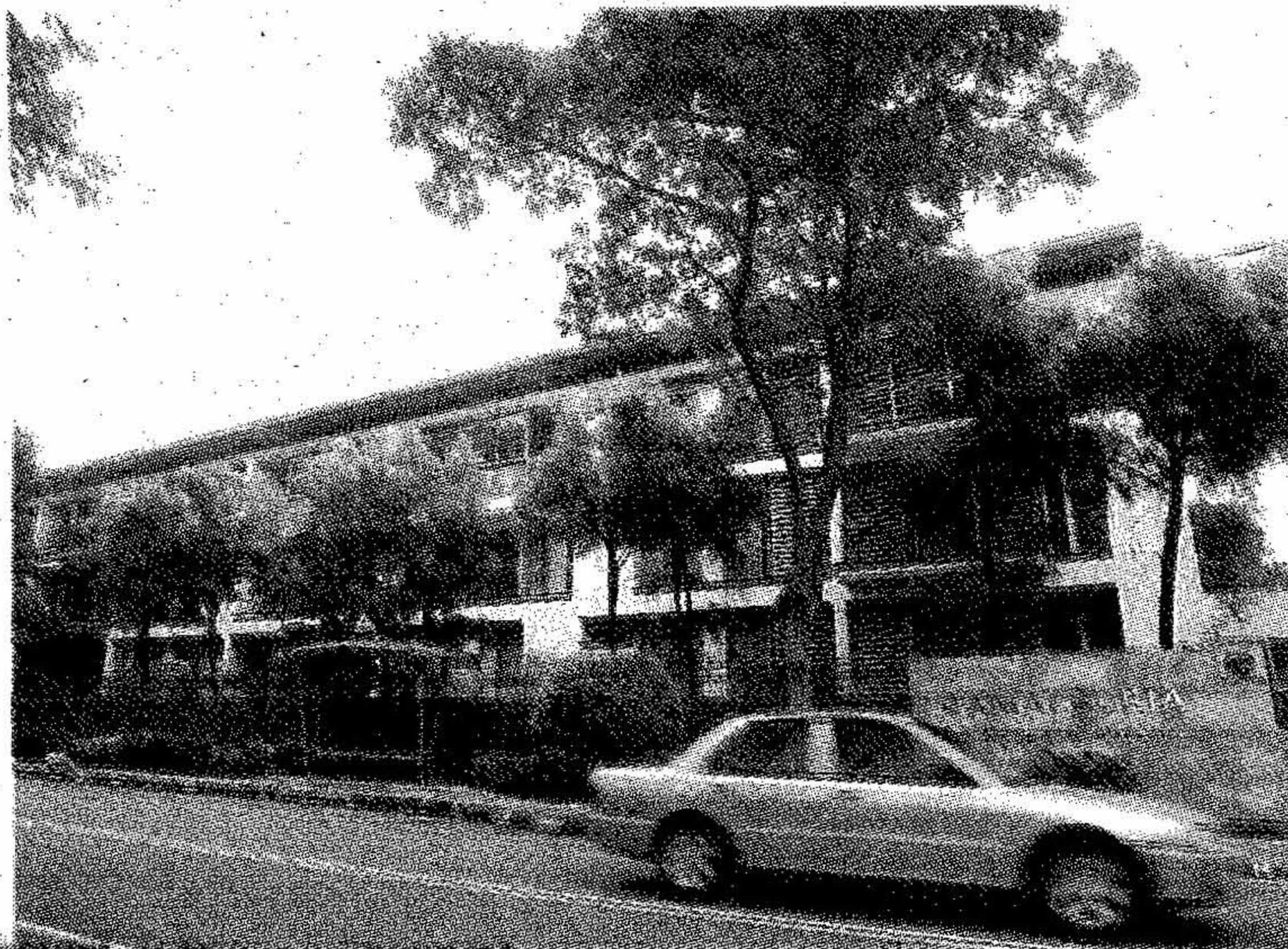
In 1942, U-Thant served as the secretary of Burma's Education Reorganisation Committee for several months before returning to his post as headmaster of the National High School for four more years.

In 1947, he was appointed press director of the Burmese government and a year later, he became the director of broadcasting.

He then took on the post of secretary at the Ministry of Information and in 1953, he was made the secretary at the Prime Minister's Office and two years later, he was assigned additional duties as executive secretary to Burma's Economic and Social Board.



The man behind the road: U-Thant worked in various departments of the Burmese government before taking on the post of secretary-general of the UN.



Elite: Luxury residential properties are some of the buildings that dot Jalan U-Thant.

His experience in various fields of civil service made him the perfect candidate as the permanent representative of Burma to the United Nations, which he took on with the rank of ambassador from 1957 to 1961.

It was during this time that he was appointed as the acting secretary-general of the United Nations.

He played important roles of heading Burmese delegations for the UN general assembly sessions and in 1959, he was one of the vice-presidents of the assembly's fourteenth session.

In 1961, U-Thant was also the chairman of the UN Congo Con-

ciliation Commission and chairman of the committee on UN Capital Development Fund. He also played the role of advisor to the prime ministers of Burma on several occasions.

Upon the recommendation of the Security Council, he was unanimously appointed Secretary General by the general assembly on Nov 30 1962 for a term of office ending Nov 3 1966. He was reappointed on Dec 2 1966 for another term ending Dec 31 1971.

U-Thant retired at the end of his second term and he died on Nov 25, 1974 after a long illness. He was 65 years old.