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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Friday, 5 January 2018



President U Htin Kyaw, second from right, welcomes guests, dignitaries and diplomats at a dinner in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of Independence Day at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening. **PHOTO: MNA**

## President hosts 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day dinner

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw and First Lady Daw Su Su Lwin hosted a dinner in commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of Independence Day in the front lawn of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening. The President and First Lady arrived at the dinner at 6:30 pm and cordially greeted the guests individually. **SEE PAGE-7**

### Independence Day celebrated in Maungtaw, Buthidaung

A STATE flag hoisting ceremony to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Independence Day was held at the Myoma playground in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State yesterday morning, with district and township department officials, ward, village administrators, and the public in attendance.

The attendees saluted the country's flag and district administrators read out a message sent by President U Htin Kyaw in recognition of the 70th Independence Day.

"The event aims to mark the anniversary of Independence Day and also promote equestrian sports. Some of the athletes who compete here will go on to compete in international events", said U Zaw Min Htway, deputy director of the Sports and Physical Education Department.

Sports competitions including futsal football, cane ball, tug-of-war, a 100-metre event for children, as well as a 500-metre event were held.

Similarly, a grand ceremony was held at the General Administration Department in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State to mark the 70th anniversary of Independence Day yesterday.— Zayya and Myint Maung



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Guard of Honour and attendees salute to the State Flag at the ceremony to celebrate the 70th Independence Day in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

# Nay Pyi Taw celebrates 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Day

THE flag hoisting and saluting ceremony, to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence Day, was held yesterday morning in front of the Nay Pyi Taw City Hall.

The ceremony was held with the aim to safeguard and protect the stability of the Union National Solidarity and Perpetuation of Sovereignty by the entire ethnic people; to work for the emergence of a constitution that meets democratic norms and can guarantee a democratic federal union; to work harder to implement a peace process; to reach the goal of “eternal peace” through political dialogue, by ensuring cooperation between all

national races of the Union and the Union Government; and to work to promote the private sector, which is the driving force for the economic of the country.

The 2018 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day State Flag hoisting ceremony was held with the flag hoisting platoon raising the flag at 4:20 a.m.

At 6 a.m., Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Union Ministers, union level organisations, high ranking Tatmadaw officers, the 2018 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day State Flag hoisting and saluting ceremony organisation sub-committee chairman

and member, deputy ministers, invited guests, departmental officials from the ministries, officers and troops from the Pobbathiri cantonment, Red Cross and fire department officials, as well as the local populace, assembled at the designated staging areas and took their places in front of the Nay Pyi Taw City Hall, where the State Flag hoisting ceremony was held.

At 6:45 a.m., the 2018 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day State Flag hoisting ceremony began with the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) Guard of Honour contingent marching into the area in front of the City Hall to take

up their positions.

Next, Vice President U Myint Swe, in his capacity as chairman of the central committee for the 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Day celebration, took his place on the dais and received the salute of the Guard of Honour.

The Vice President, Guard of Honour and the people in attendance then saluted the Republic of Union of Myanmar State Flag, while the Tatmadaw Guard of Honour band played the national anthem.

The Guard of Honour also saluted the nation's martyrs and soldiers, who gave their lives for the union, and took the four-point



Vice President U Myint Swe delivers the speech at the 70th Independence Day celebration in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

oath.

Finally, Vice President U Myint Swe read a message sent by President U Htin Kyaw for the 2018 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day, received the salute of the Honour Guard and concluded the ceremony.—Myanmar News Agency ■



The State Flag is being raised at the ceremony to celebrate the 70th Independence Day in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH**

## 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day flag hoisting, saluting ceremony held in Yangon

By Thant Zin Win & Zaw Min Latt

THE flag hoisting and saluting ceremony to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence Day was held yesterday morning in front of the Independence Monument in Maha Bando Park, Yangon.

The 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day flag hoisting ceremony was held at 4:20 a.m. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein arrived at 4:25 a.m. and received the salute of the Guard of Honour. The Yan-

gon Region Chief Minister, the Guard of Honour and those in attendance then saluted the national flag, and recognized the nation's martyrs and soldiers who gave their lives for the union, followed by their taking the four-point oath. Next, the Yangon Region Chief Minister read a message sent by President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the 2018 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day, received the salute of the Honour Guard and concluded the ceremony.

The ceremony was attended by Yangon Region Hluttaw

Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Yangon Command commander Maj-Gen Thet Pone, Yangon Region Chief Judge U Win Swe, Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Yangon Region ministers, Yangon Region Advocate, Yangon Region Auditor, high ranking Tatmadaw officers, Yangon Region Hluttaw representatives, honoured guests who had strived for independence, officials from political parties, departmental officials, as well as some 3,000 ethnic nationals and local people from the districts and townships. ■



# Ceremony to confer titles for bravery



President U Htin Kyaw (Third from Right) poses for documentary photos together with recipients of bravery titles and those who accepted the titles on behalf of the recipients. **PHOTO: MNA**



President U Htin Kyaw speaks at the ceremony to confer titles for bravery at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

A ceremony to confer titles for bravery was held yesterday morning in the Theater Room at the Presidential Palace, where President U Htin Kyaw spoke before conferring the honours.

In his address, the President welcomed attendees and invited guests with wishes for “mingalar” (auspiciousness), and spoke of the significance of holding the ceremony to honour bravery on Independence Day.

“Today is an unforgettable, auspicious day of independence as well as a day to honour with titles the persons who contributed their unselfish efforts with unwavering commitment toward building up the nation, and those who served their country bravely without a thought for their own personal interests”,

U Htin Kyaw said.

“During the time of our fathers and grandfathers, they strove to protect the sovereignty of the country and failed, so independence was lost. To become a sovereign state from being a colony was not an easy task. Unity of the ethnic nationals was built up with difficulty over many years.”

“The independence gained and sovereignty achieved through such difficulties demonstrates the heart of the people of Myanmar, and only when the sovereignty is firm and strong will all ethnic nationals be healthy in both soul and body.”

“To become an independent sovereign Republic of the Union of Myanmar was through the leadership of Bogyoke Aung San and the courage, effort and united

strength of all ethnic nationals in the country. The independence achieved through the efforts of such leaders and our forefathers needs to be retained as long as this world exists through our united efforts according to tradition. At the same time, we, the Myanmar people, all have the duty to make our country modern, developed, peaceful and stable.”

“Thus, with an aim toward establishing a peaceful, modern and developed state, the sovereign powers of the country, the legislative, administrative and judicial powers are divided as much as possible so that there are checks and balances.”

“In doing this, the ceremony today is held to award titles to honourable persons who put in extraordinary contributions,

disregarding their lives and limbs with firm minds, with exemplary and amazing bravery for the security of the nation, rule of law, peace and stability of the area and nation building. Upon the recommendation of the scrutiny board, five Thura titles will be awarded.”

“The titles and badges conferred today are a symbol by the grateful State on recipients who have successfully overcome difficulties and obstacles in their lives. I believe the titles are a symbol of honour for their offspring as well as a driving force toward the construction of a modern and developed nation. Honouring those worthy of honour is in accord with the “mingala sutra” and the State is honouring them for their efforts toward the State.”

“In conclusion, I would like to tell all our people to participate and help in rule of law, internal peace, amending the constitution, establishing a Democratic Federal Republic so that our nation will be in existence for a long time and become modern and developed.”

“Retain the good tradition of maintaining and protecting the nation’s sovereignty and independence in unity and without regional, racial and religious prejudices. Let your good examples be taken up by your offspring” said the President in conclusion.

The President then conferred the Thura bravery titles to No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Lt-Col ZawLwinSoe (BC-32340), No. 34 Bomber Squadron Major Zeya Tun (Air-3093), U Han Kaung, brother of No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Corporal Ye

Nwam (Ta/432058), U Bo Thein, father of No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Lance Corporal Myo Chit (Ta/451109) and No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Lance Corporal TunTun (Ta/451117).

The ceremony was attended by First Lady Daw Su SuLwin, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U MyintSwe and wife, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife, PyithuHluttaw Speaker U Win Myint and wife, AmyothaHluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife, Union Chief Justice U HtunHtunOo, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife, Constitutional Tribunal of Myanmar Chairperson U Myo-Nyunt and wife, Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein and wife, Tatmadaw Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win and wife, PyithuHluttaw Deputy Speaker U T KhunMyat and wife, AmyothaHluttaw Deputy Speaker U AyeTha Aung and wife, PyidaungsuHluttaw’s Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Chairman Thura U Shwe Mann and wife, Union Ministers, Union Attorney General, Union Auditor General, Union Civil Service Board Chairman, Chief-of-Staff (Army, Navy, Air), senior officers from Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office and their wives, Hluttaw Affairs committee chairmen and Hluttaw representatives, Deputy Ministers, recipients of the bravery titles and their family members.—Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (Third from Left) attends the ceremony to confer titles for bravery together with vice-presidents and their wives in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



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70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day celebration at NLD Headquarters. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

## NLD HQ celebrates 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day

70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day ceremony was held at National League for Democracy (Headquarter, HQ) in Bahan Township, Yangon yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, the State Flag, Bogoyoke Aung San and the martyrs were saluted and then stay in silence for 8 seconds in memory of the monks, people and students who lost their lives in the democracy revolution.

In his opening speech, the chairman of the ceremony and central executive committee secretariat member U Nyan Win said “National independence is the symbol of the unity of all ethnic nationals while the standard and value of national

independence is having a full democracy and human rights. The aim is establishing a democracy federal union. Now is the time to discard the bad legacy of the past and establish unity, peace and democracy federal union in a spirit of national reconciliation.

For the future of the State, if trust is built by uniting and coming together with the same worries, differences and suspicions will be reduced and disappear. Opportunities will be discovered from challenges.”

He continued and said “Respectfully returning the favors of the people, ethnic national leaders and Bogoyoke Aung San who sacrificed for independence and in honor of the nine

points and note included in the independence declaration.”

Next, a seven-point Independence Day declaration of the Central Executive Committee was read by central committee member central information committee secretary Monywa Aung Shin and messages sent by (political) parties, organisations and embassies were put on record.

The ceremony was attended by NLD central executive committee secretariat members, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Hluttaw representatives, diplomats, political parties, civil society organisations and invited guests.—Zaw Gyi ■

## Myingyan Combined-Cycle Gas Turbine Power Plant begins feeding 143MW to National Grid

THE Myingyan Combined-Cycle Gas Turbine Power Plant has begun distributing 143 megawatts (MW) to the National Grid, according to a report yesterday in the Myawady Daily.

The Sembcorp Minyngyan Power Company Limited has signed a build-operate-transfer (BOT) agreement with the Ministry of Electricity and Energy of Myanmar for its upcoming 225-megawatt power project in Mandalay. Under the agreement, Sembcorp Minyngyan

Power Company will build and operate the power plant for 22 years, after which the facility will be transferred to the Myanmar government.

The plant will be built with two high-efficiency gas turbines and waste heat generators, which will generate a capacity of 225 MW. In the first phase, the Myingyan Power Plant will distribute 143 MW to the National Grid. After the completion of the gas turbine project, the Sembcorp factory began

operating the turbine last week. Starting January 1, two gas turbines began generating power regularly, said Dr. Tun Naing, deputy minister for Electricity and Energy. The Myingyan Combined-Cycle Gas Turbine Power Plant project was begun on March 29, 2016. The Sembcorp Myingyan Power Project become one of Myanmar’s largest gas-fired power plants, and will play a key role in meeting the country’s growing demand for electricity.—GNLM ■

## Yellow-breasted bunting added to critically endangered species

Yellow-breasted bunting, a migratory bird often found in Myanmar was added to critically endangered species, according to WCS Myanmar.

The migratory bird had been put in the list of endangered species in 2013 and now added to critically endangered

species later about five years.

According to the IUCN Red List, there were about 200,000 yellow-breasted buntings globally in 2004. But the number has decreased from 120 to 600 in 2017.

A sharp decrease in the number of the rare bird is largely

due to poaching and loss of habitats, said U Thet Zaw Naing, a scholar from the WCS Myanmar.

A total of 61 yellow-breasted buntings were found in Ayeyawady delta region, ten in Bagan, and some in other regions such as Inlay, Indawgyi and Kalaw.—Myanmar Digital News

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Runner hit by a speeding car in Mandalay

A runner was hit by a car driving over the speed limit in Mandalay yesterday morning, according to a source from No (3) Traffic Police Force.

The accident occurred on a street in Chanmyathazi Township in Mandalay. The runner was participating in a mini marathon marking 70th anniversary of Independence Day celebration. The 41 year old man was admitted to a public hospital in Mandalay for medical treatment.

The driver has been charged with reckless driving by the traffic police force.—Myanmar Digital News ■

### 6,637.9564 tonnes of illegal timber seized in eight months

THE Forestry Department and the police have launched a joint crackdown on the cutting of illegal timber across the country.

With the department struggling to tackle illegal logging, smugglers have been cutting more hard wood and other woods illegally from the national forest reserve and private timber forests.

Between April and November 2017-2018 FY, the forestry department seized some 6,637.9564 tonnes of timber, 9,028.7581 tonnes of hard wood, 16,820.3536 tonnes of other woods, 4,568.6543 tonnes of charcoal, as well as 1,687 vehicles, seven containers, 108 tractors and trailers, 747 motorbikes and 168 boats and water vessels.

Myanmar has experienced the worst cases of illegal logging along several smuggling routes.—Min Myat Oo (Nay Pyi Taw) ■



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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.



## MPTA to request govt to scale down sulphur levels



A fuel pump attendant refills a vehicle in Yangon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

May Thet Hnin

THE Myanmar Petroleum Trade Association (MPTA) will submit a proposal to the Ministry of Electricity and Energy asking it to reduce the sulphur content from 500 ppm (parts per million) to 10 ppm in diesel fuel, said Dr Win Myint, secretary of MPTA.

“Once we get the approval from our association members in the upcoming meeting, we will submit the request within a month,” he added.

Many countries keep the content of sulphur in ultra low diesel or pre-

mium diesel to minimise the fuel’s environmental impact.

“The consumption of high sulphur diesel results in high level of pollutants. The number of vehicles on the country’s roads is increasing, prompting us to call for this proposal to prevent severe levels of air pollution,” said Dr. Win Myint.

Previously, the country consumed diesel having 5,000 ppm of sulphur, and later reduced the level to 500 ppm. Premium diesel with 10 ppm is also imported and distributed in the domestic market.

The percentage of those consuming this premium diesel has increased from 10 to 30 per cent.

Some 90 per cent of the fuel oil consumption in the country is dependent on the foreign market, while only 10 per cent is produced locally.

“There is only a small price gap of Ks20 between 500 ppm and 10 ppm per litre. This is why we want to scale down the sulphur level to 10 ppm, as it will not affect the market. In addition to this, it will also help reduce the environmental impact. We will conduct publicity campaigns to encourage the

public to consume premium diesel,” said Dr Win Myint.

There are some 70 fuel oil importing companies in the country, along with 2,000 fuel stations, with the fuel mostly imported through Singapore. Some 200,000 tonnes of gasoline and 400,000 tonnes of diesel are imported into the country every month.

Gasoline consumption in Myanmar increased six fold over the past five years. Nevertheless, diesel consumption does not show a significant increase, and even declined slightly. ■

## Profit-sharing between rubber employers, employees fixed at 4:6 ratio

THE rubber farming industry is planning to introduce a 4:6 profit-sharing system between rubber employers and employees, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

This system is mainly practised in rubber plantations in Thailand, as well as in China, Malaysia and

Viet Nam.

“The current system does not work well for rubber plantation owners, especially when the rubber price declines. Employers are not in a position to pay more salaries to workers. This system will be beneficial to both the employers and employees. Therefore,

we are making an arrangement to put in place the profit-sharing system next year,” said U Shwe Kyi, a rubber plantation owner from Thatone Township, Mon State.

In this system, both the employers and employees will have to contribute towards agricul-

tural costs, including for fertilisers and clearance of grass areas.

This system will be beneficial for both employers and the employees when rubber prices are high, but this system will impact both when the rubber price drops.—GNLM ■

## Pyapon post office earns Ks17.1 million within nine months

THE Pyapon post office earned Ks17,135,386 from April to December in 2017-2018 fiscal year (FY), according to Dar Moe Thidar, the post officer at the Pyapon post office.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications had expected to earn Ks13.5 million from the Pyaypon post office. However, its revenue exceeded the targeted income.

The Pyapon post office provides services, includ-

ing sale of stamps, express and overseas courier services, fax messages, and acceptance and receipt of money invoices and quick cash invoices.

Previously, the Pyapon post office provided its services in 15 townships. Starting in October 2017, the Pyapon post office has been providing services to some 299 townships. Therefore, its income has increased this fiscal year, said officials.—Aung Win (Pyapon)

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- Market Place by City Mart (6.5 Mile)
- Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)
- Market Place by City Mart (Junction City)
- City Mart (Aung San Stadium)
- City Mart (47th street)
- City Mart (Yankin)
- City Mart (China Town)
- City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)
- City Mart (FMI)
- City Mart (Junction Square)
- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
- City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
- City Mart (Junction 8)
- City Mart (St. John)
- Ocean North Point (9 mile)
- Ocean Shwegonedine

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## CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on M.V EVER ALLY VOY. NO. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5-1-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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# State honoured us for defending the sovereignty of the nation – Lt. Col Thura Zaw Lwin Soe

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw held a ceremony in the Theatre Room of the Presidential Palace to present titles for bravery, on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on January 4, yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, President U Htin Kyaw bestowed five Thura military titles. The following is an interview with the recipients, as well as those who accepted the titles on behalf of the recipients.



Lt. Col Thura Zaw Lwin Soe, No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I am Lt. Col Thura Zaw Lwin Soe. I am Commander of No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment. My troops and I fought in an engagement for the sovereignty of the nation, and I was presented with this award for this reason. In that engagement, I led the point section to charge into an enemy camp, as they fired fiercely. A few men in my unit, and I, sustained light wounds, but we fought the enemy without giving them any respite, and we won.

I was proud to put my life on the line to protect the Union from disintegration. The main point is to have an understanding. If there is understanding and trust, there will be peace. What I want to say from the bottom of my heart is that Tatmadaw personnel, like us, most hope for peace. We fought in the battles to protect the sovereignty of our country. I think all will understand this. I am an ethnic Karen national. I am still serving in the Tatmadaw. I have no racial thoughts. I am serving for the perpetual existence of the Union. Thus, I would like to tell all to stay united and prevent the disintegration of the Union.



Major Thura Zeya Tun, Namhsam Air Base

I am Major Thura Zeya Tun. I am now serving as flight safety officer at Namhsam Air Base. During the Mongko region battles in northeastern Shan, when the northern alliance attacked, I was responsible for providing air support with my fighter aircraft. I am happy to be awarded the Thura title, because I accomplished the duty assigned to me.

The anti-aircraft fire from the enemy damaged my aircraft. I did not want to lose a valuable aircraft belonging to the Tatmadaw, and I did not want the enemy to gain a moral victory by bringing down my plane. I also did not want the forces on the ground to weaken their morale, if my plane went down. With the spirit that "my camp will not be overrun without my death," I succeeded in flying my damaged plane back to base.

What I want to tell my other brother pilots here is to help our other brothers-in-arms in the Tatmadaw (Army) and Tatmadaw (Navy) and other Tatmadaw forces with the best of our Tatmadaw (Air) ability. This is the main duty of Tatmadaw (Air).



U Bo Thein, father of Lance Corporal Thura Myo Chit (Killed in Action), No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I come to accept this title on behalf of my son, Myo Chit. I am proud of my son, who defended the country with his life. I am proud that the President is awarding this title to my son. I received some compensation and entitlements. I will spend all of this in his memory. He was keen to serve in the military. When he was young, he would go to look after the cows with his mother and, while doing so, he would play at being a soldier. He wanted to be a soldier, even when he was young. I didn't even know when he went to enlist. However, he left word with his friend saying that he would return.

I am sad because he is my son, but I am also happy. I am proud of his bravery. I am proud that he was awarded the Thura title. He was hit twice. In the first battle, he was wounded, but in the second one, we lost him.

U Han Kaung, brother of Corporal Thuya Ye Nwam (Killed in Action), No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I come on behalf of my brother to accept the award. I was bereaved when I heard about his death. However, I felt happy and proud when I heard that he has been posthumously awarded this title. I do not think this is a title that he received for himself. I think he received it on behalf of the entire No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment. Both my brother and I are Naga nationals.

Even though I lost a brother, I am proud he served our country.



Lance Corporal Thura Tun Tun, No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I am proud and honoured. I have lost friends in battles, but they didn't receive awards. This is the fourth time I was in a battle. This one was memorable. I never had the experience of over-running such a large position. I participated in the attack with my friends, and did the part I was told to do. I took up my position when I reached the destination, and those following me were able to follow us with ease.

I felt sad for my friends. My friends were among those who lost their lives. I was not hit. It is memorable that we were able to hit the enemy hard. I cannot describe my happiness on being awarded this title.—News Team





# President hosts 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day dinner

## FROM PAGE-1

Present at the dinner were State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr Shwe Hlwan, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint and wife Daw Cho Cho, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife Daw Nang Kyin Kyi, Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo, Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt and wife Daw Htay Yee, Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thein and wife Daw Aye Thida, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win and wife Daw Than Than Nwe, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Khun Myat and wife, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and wife, Chairman of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann and wife, union

ministers, the Union Attorney general, the Union Auditor General, the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board, the Chairman of the Peace Commission, the Chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, Central Bank of Myanmar Governor, Joint Chief of Staff (Army, Navy, Air), Anti-corruption Commission Chairman and senior military officers and their wives, chairmen of Hluttaw affairs committees, deputy ministers, Hluttaw representatives, representatives of political parties, departmental heads, diplomats of foreign missions and their wives and Resident Representative of UNDP and Heads of UN agencies and their wives, titles and honours recipients and their families and invited guests.

During the dinner, fireworks were set off nearby and the Myanmar Radio and Television presented entertainment programmes before and during the dinner. After the dinner, the President, First Lady and guests were entertained by the Myanmar Radio modern music troupe and artists from the Department of Fine Arts, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.—Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi greets diplomats at the dinner in commemoration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence Day in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Fire works are seen in Nay Pyi Taw on the Independence Day yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

## SG Min Aung Hlaing attends ceremony to hand out medals, certificates



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing confers a certificate for bravery on Tatmadaw man. **PHOTO: MNA**

**TATMADAW** Commander-in-Chief Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing addressed a ceremony held yesterday afternoon in Zeyathiri Beikman, Nay Pyi Taw, to present medals and certificates to military personnel for their valour in battle.

The Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief said people who received military medals and certificates were those who had put on record their noble thoughts and beliefs, while accomplishing their assigned national security duties with valour and bravery. The Tatmadaw and the State proudly honours and remembers them as courageous and worthy sons of the country.

Next, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief awarded mili-

tary medals and certificates to 25 Tatmadaw personnel and 15 next-of-kin of those who had died in battle.

As of January 2018, there were six recipients of the Aung San Thuriya Medal, 47 recipients of the Thiha Thura Medal, 547 recipients of the Thura Medal, six recipients of the Thiha Bala Medal, 1,862 recipients of the Record of Gallantry, 1,887 recipients of the Gallantry Medal, 335 recipients of the Commander-in-Chief Gallantry Certificate, 2,605 recipients of the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Gallantry Certificate, two recipients of the Commander-in-Chief Honours Certificate and 1,087 recipients of the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Honours Certificate.—Myanmar News Agency ■



## Political resolution of 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary Independence Day

**D**UE to the dogmatic political belief among some Burmese leaders that Independence won through negotiations with the British Imperialists will never be genuine, Myanmar was engulfed by civil war just as the country was about to gain Independence. Flames of the civil war which started from political dogmatism spread to other sections of Myanmar's political life. As a result, the country experienced aggression in the form of Kuomintang forces who settled down on Myanmar territory. With the political instability in the country, there occurred splits in the ruling AFPFL, causing loss of faith and trust in the party.

At this time General Ne Win staged a coup d'état in March 1962 and many months later established the BSPP - Burma Socialist Program Party. This regime ruled the country by exercising a one-party system. On account of the wrong economic system—Socialist Economic System which did not agree with the country's actual situations Myanmar's national economy completely collapsed. Thus the whole country became a huge market for Thailand's products. Thus, the Myanmar economy plunged and the country dropped down to the lowest level of poverty in the world. As the socio-economic life of the people became unbearable, the people of Myanmar united to demand that the socialist government step down from power.

The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence Day highlights us that we will have yet to make concerted efforts for strengthening the foundations of democracy in the country.

To restore law and order, the Tatmadaw took over the reins of power and pledged to bring about stability and rule of law. This government was called the SLORC – State Law and Order Restoration Council. The SLORC was followed by the SPDC – State Peace and Development Council. These governments followed a market economic system and a certain amount of economic liberalization was implemented. Compared to the era of the socialist government the national economy developed to some extent, but the gap between the rich and the poor in the country became too great. There was a certain amount of improvement in the economy but Myanmar's economy still lagged behind compared with other countries in ASEAN.

In the 2010 general elections a civilian government was formed according to the 2008 Constitution. With the NLD's participation in the 2012 by-election implementation of the political reforms were initiated. In the 2015 general elections the NLD led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi won a landslide victory.

The first-ever democratic civilian government led by the NLD was left with the good and evil heritages experienced during the period of 70 years after gaining Independence.

To put it simply according to the actual situations in the history, Myanmar inherited evil legacies left by the previous governments. The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence Day highlights us that we will have yet to make concerted efforts for strengthening the foundations of democracy in the country. Here we would like to say that we must commit ourselves to implementing the establishment of a Federal Democratic Republic which will guarantee democratic rights for all the ethnic national Union citizens on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Myanmar Independence Day. ■

By Htun Tin Htun

**K**NOWLEDGE (Education) and Character (Morality/Discipline) are powers for the development, liberty, justice and peace for any nation. Efforts (work-hard), wish-to-do, mind (will) and wisdom make the impossible possible and the people in this planet need to cooperate, coordinate, compromise and collaborate with these faculties in order to make the world more just, peaceful and prosperous. Equity (pro-poor), empowerment (pro-woman), environment (pro-nature) and employment (pro-job) are of great importance for the development of mankind in this planet. Partnership with the people to implement the activities and programs in order to achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs: Agenda 2030) for the profit, prosperity, peace in this planet is our great concern and noble duty.

Our government announced the national objectives for the 2018, 70th Anniversary of Independence Day falling on the 4th January 2018 as follows: (1) All nationalities to collectively preserve and protect non-disintegration of the Union; non-disintegration of national unity; and perpetuation of national sovereignty; (2) To strive hard to draw up a constitution suitable for the Union in accordance with democratic principles and norms for the emergence of a Democratic Federal Union; (3) To strive hard and exert our utmost efforts to implement the peace process as quickly as possible; (4) For all nationalities to work together with the State to achieve the goal of “lasting peace” through political dialogues; and (5) By encouraging the private sector which is the main engine of growth for the economy, to collectively exert our efforts for improving and advancing the socio-economic life of the people (Page 15, The GNLM Daily, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017). Unity is strength; United we stand divided we fall; Union represents over 100 ethnic/indigenous groups who are living together, staying together, learning together, working together, performing together, sharing together, caring together and leaving good legacy together. Right understanding (view), right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration (unique eight in one representing wisdom, morality and concentration) is Noble Eightfold Path taught

by the Awakened One, the Buddha is a path leading to the cessation of all sufferings and sorrows for all mankind to learn and practice daily in solving the problems being encountered and in attempting to attain highest bliss.

Integration of all nationalities in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is of paramount importance and the duty to defend and protect the national sovereignty is our noble duty as every citizen has the rights and responsibilities. No one is above the law and rule of law is of great importance for the perpetuation of national sovereignty. Discipline is our cardinal virtue and observing the (5) moral precepts (the great charity for all mankind in this planet) and practicing the virtues of Brahma Vihara (loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity) make the planet just, peaceful and prosperous. Every citizen of the nation enjoys equal rights and “equality before the law” as well as “ignorance of law is no excuse” for the “rule of law, law and order” as the first essential condition for making democracy secure in our lives is to be based all our activities firmly on the rule of law and who ever breaks the laws must take the consequences as we are responsible for what we have done.

Peace of the people of this planet is our top priority and the road to peace is not always simple and smooth; a peace based on respect for the dignity and rights of each member of the society, respect for each ethnic group and its identity, respect for the rule law, law and order, and respect for a democratic order that enables each individual and every group-no one is left behind-to offer its legitimate contribution to the common good. Every citizen of our nation needs to be united and must learn how to live in peace and harmony with each other regardless of race or religion; for equality of among all races and peace and tranquility across the nation, we must all strive on with diligence and vigilance to build up nation-wide peace. Nothing is impossible to the people of the Union of Myanmar with wish-to-do, work-hard, will and wisdom.

Devoted himself day and night to achieve independence, peace and stability in the country and for the guarantee of human rights for all citizens is Bogoyoke Aung San and he wrote that “One-man-hero-efforts cannot bring about the Jewel of Independence; for all of



The State Flag is being raised at the ceremony to celebrate the 70th Independence Day in Yangon yesterday.  
PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

us to enjoy human rights including the right to own property, it is the national cause for all of us to take part in the revolution for the Independence.” Every citizen of the Union of Myanmar will always remember the gratitude of our national leaders and ancestors for their selfless struggles and dauntless courage while enjoying the benefits of freedom and independence. Never swerving from just, equity and freedom, reflecting the strongly held conviction of the founding fathers of our nation that true freedom cannot survive without justice. Challenges that the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar faces nowadays are many and each challenge calls for strength, patience and courage; our nation is a rich tapestry of different peoples, languages and religions, woven on a backdrop of

vast natural potential. Each age in the life of a nation brings its own responsibilities just as it has to bear the legacies of the past; we today who have been given the opportunity to effect changes that could open new vistas of progress for our nation, will strive to discharge our duties with probity and humanity we would like to leave to the future a land that has been nurtured with care and respect, a healthy, happy and beautiful land.

People of the Union of Myanmar have seen a great sign of hope that the leaders of the various traditions in this country are making efforts to work together; in a spirit of harmony and mutual respect for peace and for helping the poor and for educating in authentic religious and human values. Every individual, family, group and organization desirous of peace are urged and

encouraged that the people living in this nation (experiencing civil conflicts for nearly 70 years) want to live in peace and it is our people who want peace most, more than anyone else and peace can bring about progress which can result in sustainable development so that we must not lose sight of our people's desires. Religious differences need not be a source of division and distrust, but rather a force for unity, forgiveness, tolerance and wise nation building; the religions can play a significant role in repairing the emotional, spiritual and psychological wounds of those who have suffered in the years of conflict. People are usually reluctant to courageously assess as to whether their concepts and ideas they firmly hold on to dearly are true and false and reasonable or not; this weakness must surely be

overcome with great seriousness in the peace process. Evidence shows that Myanmar is a nation comprising 135 ethnic national races coexisting for generations throughout history facing difficulties and challenges together and sharing sorrows and happiness and it can be likened to a beautiful garden with full of lovely flowers of different colours. The road to peace is not always smooth but it is the only way that will lead our people to their dream of a just, developed and prosperous land that will be their refuge, their pride and their joy; the quest for peace has to be reinforced by the attainment of sustainable development goals that the future of posterity might be assured.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights was declared to the world as the basis for the international community's efforts to promote justice, peace and human development worldwide and to resolve conflicts through dialogue not the use of force. Arduous process of national reconciliation and peace building only advance through a commitment to justice and respect for human rights; the wisdom of the ancients defined justice precisely as a steadfast will to give each person his due; the justice as the basis of all true and lasting peace.

The road ahead is long but we will make it with confidence, trusting in the power of peace, love and joy with our firm resolution, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. Exceedingly difficult to practice in this planet is “To avoid evil things, to cultivate good and to cleanse one's mind” and we all must accept the cardinal principle that we are responsible for what we have thought, spoken and done to the Universe. Difficulties and challenges whatever we may have to face at present and in the future can surely and definitely be overcome by the power of the unity of our people as there is no power that can compare with the power of the trust, support and unity of the people and what we need to do and exert with might and means now is to build up a disciplined, united, developed and modernized nation to be able to stand tall in the midst of all nations in this planet.

May you all be free from all dangers and enmity, physical pains and mental sufferings!! May you all be healthy, happy, peaceful and prosperous in the days to come!!! May the Dhamma, love, peace and happiness be with us!!! ■

## Union Spirit and Independence are interdependent

By Tommy Pauk

The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence day\_ 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018 is regarded as the major landmark of the union spirit in Myanmar. Bearing the union spirit, all national brethren fought together back our own independence from the British colonialists. As we all know that the Union of Myanmar is composed with diverse 135 national races. Since time immemorial, we have been living in our territory with own sovereignty. We have lived in Myanmar and supported through thick and thin. Unfortunately, due to lack of modern weaponry, Myanmar was occupied by the British colonialists thus became a British colony. Myanmar had been a British colony for 62 years (from 1886 to 1948 ). However, throughout the colonial periods, all the national brethren or national races had striven for the independence struggle in union. We never ever wanted to live under the reign of any alien, or colonialists. We prefer to live under the rulers from 135 national races harmoniously. This aspiration reveals that we regard the union spirit which is a drive for unity. In other words, we value the unity derived from the union spirit. Unless the union spirit prevails, the independence will be lost. Similarly, the independence strengthens or develops the union spirit. Therefore, these two are interdependent. Thanks to our forefathers who had made all the national races unified. They nurtured the union spirit and unity. They also laid down the aspiration for everlasting unity, gaining genuine independence from the British and genuine union spirit indeed.

In fact, Myanmar is owned by all national races and we have rights to portray our country's bright destiny and prosperity. Achieving independence means that the entirety of countrymen living in Myanmar can earn their living and can enjoy human rights freely. In a broader sense, every one of us can have rights to participate in social and political activities independently. Since all the ethnic people or national brethren belong to Myanmar's territories and sovereignty, they ought to achieve the fruitfulness of our own independence.

We all must maintain the union spirit so that our independence will be everlasting in the world. We must bear in mind that union spirit is the engine to drive socio-economic development of the Union of Myanmar. In addition, the independence is essential for us to make decisions by ourselves for all-round development of the entire nation. We should enjoy the fruitfulness of independence and understand the essence of it. All the citizens of the Union of Myanmar are obliged to safeguard the own independence and to maintain the union spirit. Mutual respect, mutual understanding and mutual help must be practiced among the diverse national races. Our wise leaders from all national races have cultivated the union spirit and built the Union of Myanmar brilliantly. The next generations must pay respect or tribute to those founded the Union of Myanmar as an independent nation among the nations in the world. In order not to lose our independence, the present and next generations are responsible for preserving the independence and union spirit all the time. We should not forget that our forefathers had sacrificed their lives to regain our own independence from the British colonialists. Nowadays, the alien destructive elements are creating misunderstanding among national races in Myanmar. Consequently, these misunderstandings can cause estrangement among the national races. We should be cautious enough to watch and combat the activities of the alien destructive elements. Unless otherwise, there will be disruption among the national races.

To uphold the union spirit and independence, social justice, human rights and equity must be prevalent among the national races. If the union spirit is lost, the independence will be affected. The leadership and the people (representing all national races) must strive hard to maintain the union spirit and independence in harmonious way so that the Union of Myanmar can stand tall prestigiously among the nations in the world. We pay tribute to the independence architect Bogoyoke Aung San and leaders of the national races for the independence struggle against the British colonialists. We always wish our country the Union of Myanmar a peaceful and prosperous nation!!! ■





Basic Education High School No. 6 Botahtaung (St. Paul) where Children's Literature Festival will be held. PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY



## Children's Literature Festival to be held 6-8 January in Yangon

With the intention of nurturing children and instilling in them the love of reading, the Children's Literature Festival, will be held from 6-8 January at the Basic Education High School No. 6 Botahtaung (St. Paul) in Yangon.

The Children's Literature Festival is jointly organised by

the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education and the Yangon Region Government. Any interested children and parents are invited to attend. The festival will be open from 9 a.m to 8 p.m. During the festival, many activities such as a story-telling competition, poem-reciting com-

petitions, a painting competition, literature talks, talk shows, debates and entertainment programmes will be included. Educational booths organised by state high schools and private schools will include quiz tests. Other interesting activities such as elephant dancing and puppet

shows will be presented.

Book stalls for book lovers will be opened along the corner of the school during the festival.

"We aim at nurturing the children who will be the future leaders and who possess intelligence, creativity, verbal skills and a love of literature. Every-

one is welcome to join this festival", said U Ye Naing, Director-General of the News and Periodicals Enterprise. Several Children's Literature festivals have been successfully held in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Mawlamyint, Taunggyi and Monywa. — Chan Myae Thu ■

## Interviewing officials of Children's Literature Festival Yangon

San Min Aung

THE Children's literature festival Yangon will be held from 6-8 January, 2018 at the Basic Education High School No. (6) Botahtaung (Saint Paul).

Officials of the festival were interviewed about preparations for the festival.

Daw Myint Myint Soe (a) Daw May Soe, Pyithu Hluttaw Representative

This festival has been jointly organized by the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Education and Yangon Region Government, and will be held at the Basic Education High School No. (6) Botahtaung. I'm very happy that this festival will be held in my township. As a Hluttaw representative, I participated in and helped in all areas of the festival.

Children, nowadays, spend most of their time playing games (on computers and mobile phones) and watching TV. In fact, they should be playing (physically) with their friends from school. We want them to know the joy and fun they'll have if they do this, as in the past. But children nowadays do not play this way. By holding this sort of festival, children will know they can be happy playing (physically) together. Their thoughts will be better and they'll learn more.

This festival is good for their



Daw Myint Myint Soe (a) Daw May Soe.

futures. All are invited to come and join the festival, which will include fun and games, along with educational and knowledge-activities for them. Parents shouldn't worry about sending their children, as it will be totally safe. Responsible personnel from the government, security personnel and representatives, like me, will be there all the time. Teachers will be there, too. So, all are invited to come and join.

### Daw Moe Moe, Principal of Amae Eain (Mother's House) Private School

I am responsible for a stand at the festival. It is an anatomy stand. We'll show children and parents how our body parts work and function. Biology is not only for high school students. We'll make models of hearts and lungs, and show young children where these are in their bodies.

The development of children



Daw Moe Moe.

not only needs the support of the government, but also from parents, as well. Parents need to make their children spend time with books, instead of on mobile phone (games). Schools also need to force students to go to libraries. It is hoped that the children who come to the festival will be inspired by what other children display there. We will treat the visiting children with Myanmar snacks. This is to promote the theme of "Eat Myanmar snacks to have good health." Instead of saying don't eat foreign or spicy foods, we will show how good Myanmar snacks are. We'll treat all visiting children to Myanmar snacks throughout the entire three days of the festival.

Daw Swe Zin, International Children School, Yangon

Actually I'm not from the



Daw Swe Zin.

teaching department. I'm from the management side. Commenting as a person from the education circle, it is very important to create in children the interest to read. There are many ways to create this interest. All these will be shown at the festival. Our mayor asked us about how we can participate as private schools. The time we had was short, with many holidays. So we plan to inform the children about what we are teaching. But by participating this time, we also have more understanding of what we can show, if this festival is held again. There will be much about physical games, which can be learnt from books. On the mental part, more can be learnt from books. I think children will realize that they can learn so many things from books. In order to create this realization, I want to say, 'Bring your children to the festival.' ■

## Tatmadaw captures KIA posts

The KIA armed group's camps in Kachin State allegedly used for smuggling have been discovered and overtaken, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief's Office said yesterday.

Armed groups from the KIA have long been suspected of smuggling valuable natural resources in Kachin State, Bhamo District, Mansi Township, Manweingyi-Gaikhtate region to other countries, according to the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief's Office.

Tatmadaw columns have conducted operations since 13 November 2017 in an area about 25 miles southwest of Namkham Town, and "there were some engagements", the commander-in-chief's office said.

On 27 November 2017, the armed group near Manwein Village, Manweingyi village tract, opened fire and attacked the Tatmadaw's administrative helicopter.

Tatmadaw columns subsequently conducted security operations in the area, where some KIA smuggling camps were discovered and taken over. — Myanmar News Agency ■



# Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President

*The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.*

From Mr. Xi Jinping,  
President of People's Republic of China,  
Distinguished Mr. President,

On the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Chinese Government and Chinese people and in my own name, I extend my warm congratulations and best wishes to you, your government and your people.

Last year, under the leadership of you and Myanmar government, Myanmar has made significant achievements in maintaining stability, developing economy, promoting peace process and expanding foreign exchanges. China is pleased to see your country's progress.

Presently, China-Myanmar relation is gaining a sound momentum of healthy and stable development. Last year, we held a fruitful meeting, reaching important new consensus on promoting China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperation, which will guide the development of bilateral relations in the next phase. I place great importance on China-Myanmar relations and wish to work with you to further promote the development of China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, bringing more benefits to our two countries and two peoples.

May your country enjoy prosperity and your people happiness.

May you good health and wish you all the best..

From Mr. Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma  
President of the Republic of South Africa,  
Your Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the celebration of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 04 January 2018, the Government and people of the Republic of South Africa join me in conveying to Your Excellency, the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, warmest greetings and sincere congratulations.

May I take this opportunity to express the wish for Your Excellency's good health and also reaffirm our desire to further enhance and consolidate the excellent bond of friendship that exists between our countries.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Aleksandar Vucic  
President of the Republic of Serbia  
Excellency,

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I extend to you, on behalf of the people of the Republic of Serbia and on my own behalf, sincere congratulations and best wishes for further prosperity of your country and its people.

The Republic of Serbia and its people are deeply appreciative of your country's principled position regarding non-recognition of the unilaterally declared independence of the so-called "Kosovo". We perceive this position on your part, based on the respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia, as an affirmation of the genuinely friendly relations and solidarity existing between our two countries.

Drawing on the belief that our two countries are firmly committed to strengthening their bilateral relations, I trust that the cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will be enriched with new content in the coming period.

I take this opportunity to express my hope that the situation in your country will soon stabilize and that conditions will be created for the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to unimpededly develop further, to the benefit and happiness of your people.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Raul Castro Ruz  
President of the Councils of the State and  
Ministers of the Republic of Cuba  
President,

On the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I cordially congratulate you.

I renew to you assurances of my highest consideration.

From Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier  
President of the Federal Republic of  
Germany  
Mr. President,

On the occasion of Independence Day in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar allow me to offer you my sincere congratulations and those of my fellow Germans. Democracy, freedom and the protection of human

rights are important assets for a country's peaceful development. Please rest assured that Germany will continue to be a reliable partner at Myanmar's side in the future and will wholeheartedly support you as you face the challenges of democratisation that lie ahead.

I hope that your country will soon find domestic peace for all citizens, which is vital for stability, prosperity and democracy, and I wish you and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar every success and all the best for achieving this.

From Mr. Alain Berset  
President of the Swiss Confederation  
His Excellency,

On behalf of the Swiss Federal Council and on my own behalf. I would like to convey my warmest congratulations to you, Your Excellency, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and especially on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of you country this year. I also send my sincerest wishes for the well-being and prosperity of your country and for your own good health and success.

Switzerland and Myanmar's relations have recently been strengthened thanks to the celebrations of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our diplomatic relations and to numerous bilateral meetings which take place in 2017.

You can be assured of Switzerland's commitment to developing the mutual trust and friendship with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, as well as to continuing supporting your country in its efforts to achieve peace, transition to democracy and sustainable socio-economic progress. We look forward to continuing this relationship and make it flourish further in the years ahead.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Kim Yong Nam  
President of the Presidium of the Supreme  
People's Assembly  
Democratic People's Republic of Korea  
Excellency,

I extend warm congratulations to you as well as to your friendly government and people on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence of Myanmar.

I take this opportunity to wish you greater success in your responsible work for progress and prosperity of the country.

**SEE PAGE-12**

## Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio

*The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to Vice Presidents of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.*

From Mr. Phankham Viphavanh  
Vice President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic,  
Your Excellency,

I have the great pleasure to express my warmest congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through you to the Government and the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on the auspicious occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am strongly confident that the existing traditional bond of friendship and close cooperation between our two countries and peoples will be further strengthened both at bilateral and multilateral levels for the progress and prosperity of our peoples.

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my heartiest wishes to Your Excellency's personal well-being and greater success. In your noble tasks for the continued progress of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Phankham Viphavanh  
Vice President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic,  
Your Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. I have the pleasure to express my heartfelt

congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through you to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I believe that the existing traditional friendly relations and close cooperation between our countries and peoples will be further enhanced and developed in the coming years for mutual benefits of our two countries and peoples.

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes to Your Excellency's good health and greater success in your noble tasks for the continued prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



# Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President

## FROM PAGE-11

**From Her Majesty Elizabeth II  
Queen of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland,  
Excellency,**

"I send Your Excellency my congratulations on the celebration of your National Day, together with my best wishes for the happiness of all your country's people in the coming year".

**From His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah  
Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni  
King of Cambodia,  
Mr President,**

The celebration of the 70th Independence Day of Myanmar offers me the happy occasion to address to Your Excellency, on behalf of the people of Cambodia and on my own behalf, my sincere and warm congratulations.

The Kingdom of Cambodia salutes the notable progress made by the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in the construction of a sustainable development and the realization of the well-being of the people. I have found memories of your State Visit to our Kingdom in February 2017, and I congratulate the quality of relations of friendship and cooperation between our two countries.

While renewing to Your Excellency my best wishes of happiness and success, as well as for the peace and prosperity of the people of Myanmar, accept, Mr President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From Mr. Bounnhang Vorachith  
President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic,  
Excellency,**

On behalf of the people of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and on my own behalf, I have the great pleasure to extend my heartfelt congratulations and warmest wishes to Your Excellency and through Your Excellency to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am believe that the existing traditional long-standing bond of friendly relations and close cooperation between our two countries will be further strengthened and deepened in the years ahead for mutual benefits of our two peoples.

On the Occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes to Your Excellency good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From H-E Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's  
Democratic Republic,  
Your Excellency,**

I have the great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to Your Excellency and through Your Excellency to the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I strongly believe that our close collaboration as well as the friendly ties and cooperation between our two countries will be further strengthened in the years to come for mutual benefits of our two countries and the ASEAN family.

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes for Your Excellency's good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika  
President of the People's Democratic Republic of**

**Algeria,  
Excellency the President,**

On the occasion of celebration of the National Day of the Republic of Union of Myanmar. It gives me a great pleasure to extend to you, on behalf of the people and the government of Algeria and on my behalf, my warmest congratulations and best wishes of good health and peace to your Excellency, as well as continuous progress and prosperity to the people of Myanmar.

I also would like to seize this happy occasion, to assure you my willingness to work with you to strengthen and enhance the links of friendship and cooperation that exist between our two countries for the mutual benefit of our two peoples.

Please accept, Excellency the President, the expression of my highest consideration.

**From Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid  
President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,  
Excellency,**

I have great pleasure to extend our warm greetings and felicitations to Your Excellency and through you to the people of Myanmar on the auspicious occasions of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The relations between our two countries are rooted in common history, heritage and centuries old people to people contact. These commonalities act as driving force in our joint efforts to address the common challenges of peace, security and development.

I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes for your good health, long life and happiness and continued peace and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From Mrs. Sheikh Hasina  
Prime Minister of the People's Republic of  
Bangladesh,  
Excellency,**

The government and the people of Bangladesh join me in extending our heartiest greetings and felicitations to you and to the people of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Bangladesh attaches great importance to her relations with Myanmar and wishes to work together to address common challenges of peace and development for the benefit of our peoples. I sincerely hope that greater and meaningful engagement between our two countries would further strengthen the bilateral relations.

On this auspicious occasion, I wish Your Excellency good health and long life and happiness and peace and prosperity for the people of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From Mr. Tran Dai Quang  
President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,  
Excellency,**

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the State, the Government and the people of Viet Nam and in our own names, we have the great honour to extend to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Myanmar our warmest congratulations.

We would like to share the happiness with the people of Myanmar on significant achievements recorded in the last seven decades. We firmly believe that, under your clear-sighted leadership, the people of Myanmar will continue to achieve greater accomplishments in the cause of national construction and development, turning Myanmar into a prosperous country with an increasing role and position in the region and the world.

We are delighted at the strong and rapid development of relations between Viet Nam and Myanmar recently. Particularly, the recent State visit to Myanmar

by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong created a new milestone with the upgrading of bilateral relations to "Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership". We look forward to closer cooperation with Your Excellency in strengthening and furthering the relationship between Viet Nam and Myanmar, in the interests of our two peoples, and for the sake of peace, stability, cooperation and development in the Asia-Pacific.

On this occasion, we wish Your Excellency good health, happiness and success in your noble position.

**From Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc  
Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,  
Excellency,**

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the State, the Government and the people of Viet Nam and in our own names, we have the great honour to extend to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Myanmar our warmest congratulations.

We would like to share the happiness with the people of Myanmar on significant achievements recorded in the last seven decades. We firmly believe that, under your clear-sighted leadership, the people of Myanmar will continue to achieve greater accomplishments in the cause of national construction and development, turning Myanmar into a prosperous country with an increasing role and position in the region and the world.

We are delighted at the strong and rapid development of relations between Viet Nam and Myanmar recently. Particularly, the recent State visit to Myanmar by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong created a new milestone with the upgrading of bilateral relations to "Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership". We look forward to closer cooperation with Your Excellency in strengthening and furthering the relationship between Viet Nam and Myanmar, in the interests of our two peoples, and for the sake of peace, stability, cooperation and development in the Asia-Pacific.

On this occasion, we wish Your Excellency good health, happiness and success in your noble position.

**From Mr. Sergio Mattarella  
President of the Italian Republic,  
Your Excellency,**

On the occasion of the National Day – Independence Day of your country on behalf of the people of the Slovak Republic and on my own behalf, I have a honour to convey my warmest congratulations.

May I take this occasion to wish all citizens of Myanmar peace, mutual tolerance and understanding, which are necessary for long term stability and prosperity.

I believe that the friendly relations and cooperation between the Slovek Republic and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will continue to develop in all areas of common interest and to the satisfaction of citizens of our countries.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From Mr. Andrej Kiska  
President of the Slovak Republic,  
Excellency,**

On the occasion of the National Day – Independence Day of your country on behalf of the people of the Slovak Republic and on my own behalf, I have a honour to convey my warmest congratulations.

May I take this occasion to wish all citizens of Myanmar peace, mutual tolerance and understanding, which are necessary for long term stability and prosperity.

I believe that the friendly relations and cooperation between the Slovek Republic and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will continue to develop in all areas of common interest and to the satisfaction of citizens of our countries.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



# Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to State Counsellor

*The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.*

From Li Keqiang  
Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China  
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Chinese government, I extend my warm congratulations and best wishes to you, your government and your people.

We are pleased to see that in the past year your government has been committed to maintaining stability, developing economy, improving people's livelihood and expanding foreign exchanges, all of which has brought new achievements of development.

At present, China and Myanmar are deepening political, economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation, bringing tangible benefits to the two peoples. We cherish China-Myanmar Pauk-Phaw friendship and wish to work with Myanmar to strengthen our traditional friendship, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation and promote China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership to a new height.

May your country enjoy prosperity and your people happiness.

May you good health and wish you all the success.

From Wang Yi  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China  
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I extend my warm congratulations and best wishes to you.

We are pleased to see that last year Myanmar has made notable achievements in various undertakings. China and Myanmar have deepened exchanges and cooperation in all fields and maintained close cooperation and coordination in regional and international affairs.

I wish to work with you to implement the consensus reached by leaders of the two countries and make unremitting efforts to promote the development of China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.

May you good health and wish you all the success.

From Ms. Ana Brnabic  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia  
Her Excellency,

On the occasion of Independence Day I extend to you, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and on my own behalf, cordial congratulations and best wishes for the further successful development and overall progress of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am confident that the coming years will bring further expansion of our bilateral ties and cooperation, based on excellent political relations and friendship.

I am truly grateful for the principled support that your country lends to the preservation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia, with the hope that you will continue to maintain this position in the future, too. I hope that conditions will be created soon for the situation in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to stabilize, enabling the country's further unimpeded development, to the benefit of your people.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba  
Excellency,

On the occasion of commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> An-

niversary of the Proclamation of Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I extend to you our cordial congratulations while ratifying our wish to continue strengthening relations between our two countries.

I renew to you assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Ri Yong Ho  
Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Democratic People's Republic of Korea  
Excellency,

I extend warm congratulations to you on the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence of Myanmar.

I take this opportunity to express my conviction that our bilateral relations of friendship and cooperation will invariably strengthen and develop.

From Dr. Thongloun Sisoulith  
Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic,  
Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and on my own behalf, I have the great pleasure to convey my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through you to the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on the auspicious occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am strongly confident that the existing long-standing traditional bond of friendship relations and close cooperation between our two countries and the governments will be further strengthened and developed in the years to come for mutual benefits of our two countries and peoples as well as for the peace, friendship and cooperation in the region and the world.

On the Occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to express my best wishes to Your Excellency good health, personal well-being and greater success in your noble tasks in leading the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to further prosperity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic,  
Your Excellency,

I have the great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to Your Excellency and through Your Excellency to the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I strongly believe that our close collaboration as well as the friendly ties and cooperation between our two countries will be further strengthened in the years to come for mutual benefits of our two countries and the ASEAN family.

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes for Your Excellency's good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Abdelkadar Messahel  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria,  
Excellency,

It gives me a great pleasure, while the Republic of

Union of Myanmar is celebrating its National Day, to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes of good health and peace to your Excellency, as well as continuous progress and prosperity to the people of Myanmar.

I would also like to seize this opportunity to reiterate my willingness to work with you to enhance the relations of cooperation existing between our two countries for the mutual benefit of our two peoples.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E Mr. Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah  
Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman,  
Your Excellency,

Please accept my sincere cordial congratulations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

May I also take this opportunity to reaffirm our desire to enhance the bilateral relation between our two friendly countries in the spirit of constructive and fruitful cooperation. I wish you, Your Excellency, all good health and very success, and to the friendly people of your country peace and prosperity.

Yours sincerely,

From Mr. Pham Binh Minh  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,  
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I have the great honour to convey to Your Excellency my warmest congratulations.

I would like to congratulate on important achievements accomplished by the people and Government of Myanmar in the reform and open-door process over the past years, bringing Myanmar to a higher position in the region and the world. I particularly congratulate on your successful hosting of the 13th ASEM Foreign Minister Meeting.

I am delighted to note that the Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership relations, established on the occasion of the State visit to Myanmar by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, have made significant, strides forward, both bilaterally as well as in the framework of regional and international cooperation. I also highly appreciate the close cooperation between the two Foreign Ministries, especially the successful organization of the 7th Political Consultation in Myanmar.

I look forward to welcoming Your Excellency to visit Viet Nam and co-chair the 9th meeting of the Viet Nam – Myanmar Joint Commission in 2018.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes for your good health, happiness and success.

From Mr. Ivan Korcok  
Deputy Minister and Acting Minister of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic,  
Your Excellency,

It's my pleasure to send you heartfelt greetings and sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I'd like to express my conviction that the friendly relations between our countries will deepen and strengthen also through contribution of cooperation between both our ministries of foreign affairs.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.



# Outstanding students from Myanmar placed in top-9 of Go Green in City 2017 competition

By Nandar Win & Win Win Maw

Outstanding students from Myanmar made their country proud by being placed in the top-9 of the Go Green in the City 2017 international competition. Maung Phyto Thu Htet, a fourth-year Information Science Technology student, and Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung, a third-year Computer Engineering student, entered the contest and stood in the top-9.

The following is an interview with the outstanding students who placed in top-9 of the international competition.

**Q:** Could you explain about the Go Green in the City 2017 international competition?

**Maung Phyto Thu Htet:** The competition was organised by Schneider Electric Co., Ltd, which is based in France. Many people took an interest in this competition via Facebook and other social media. Those who were interested in this project, applied for it online. There were more than 800 competitors from 136 countries this time.

**Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung:** There was a talk show on Go Green in the City 2017 competition in our school, and the head of the department told us about it and urged me to enter the competition. Accordingly, I made a project presentation. Luckily, I was selected in the top-5 of the competition.

**Q:** How was the competition?

**Maung Phyto Thu Htet:** This competition aims to present a fantastic idea about how to make our society green. We entered the green project and had to participate in many projects at different levels, along with the registration process, such as Team Mate, Challenge and Idea Submission. I had competed to represent my country, and was chosen in the top-5 and listed at the world champion level. As a result, I had to compete in the semi-final again. Fortunately, I was selected to represent Myanmar, and our team stood in the top-9 at Japan's level.

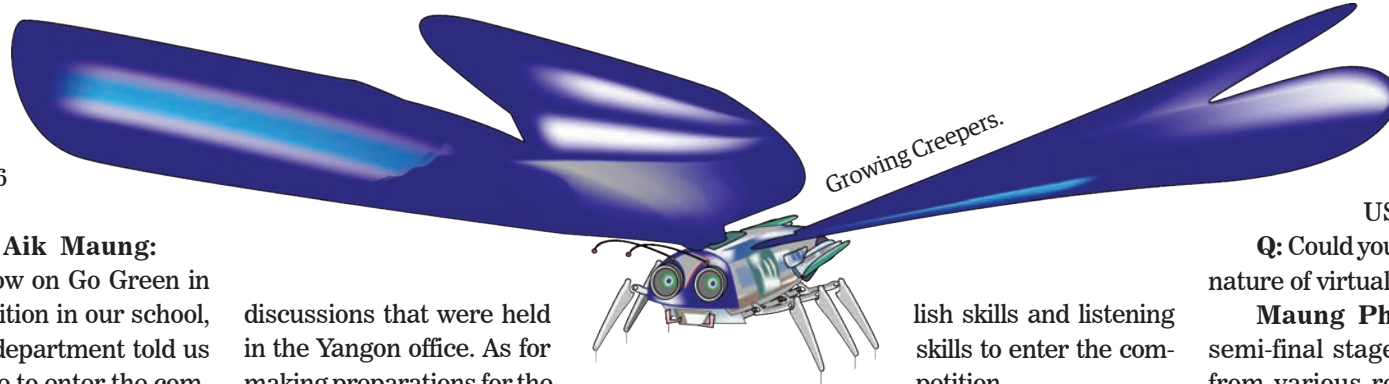
**Q:** Could you tell us more about your preparations?

**Maung Phyto Thu Htet:** Myanmar has been entering this competition for three years. As for me, I was selected in the final list and came to Yangon. I had to learn how to make a good presentation, besides developing my English proficiency skills. I had to go in for the title 'Energy Saving', together with the environmental conservation project. It is of vital importance to have your own innovative and creative ideas, from reading, thinking, travelling and surfing the internet.

In the first phase, I entered many stages, such as Challenge and Idea Submission. I also participated in the group



Myanmar outstanding students who stood top-9 of Go Green in City 2017 competition pose for a commemorative photo. **PHOTO: HLA MOE**



discussions that were held in the Yangon office. As for making preparations for the projects, we switched on the lights, and then we wrote "Switch off the light after using it." It looked like an energy-saving campaign with the use of sensors. I first thought of "Cool Green" to give the feel of a shady place, when the word "Creepers" occurred to me. Therefore, I had to go to many places, such as farms and gardens in Pyin Oo Lwin, where I could combine "technology and innovation."

**Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung:** Contestants had participated from 155 different countries, and we had to think of "creative ideas, as well as innovations." We had to hone our presentation skills, spoken Eng-

lish skills and listening skills to enter the competition.

**Q:** What was your project in the competition?

**Maung Phyto Thu Htet:** My project was 'Growing Creepers', which is not an easy task to do. I built a steel structure design with a shady place and a 20-foot-wide plot of land to grow the creepers. Furthermore, I added a water-pot stand around it, in the traditional Myanmar style. My project aimed to raise the environmental awareness of the local people who throw litter and rubbish in public areas, such as recreation centres and rivers.

I added two kinds of robot birds. One robot bird was placed near a tree branch; another one was placed near

the water-pot stand. I got this idea from a Myanmar folk tale, "Kyee Nyi Naung," which means "A Tale of Two Bird Brothers."

This project will be carried out as part of the Pyin Oo Lwin Yadanar Myo Thit project. My project is the only one of its kind in Myanmar, as well as in the world, and I am trying my best to show it within a year. I am sure that my project can help my country.

**Q:** Could you tell us about your experience during the competition?

**Maung Phyto Thu Htet:** This is my own creation and innovation, which can help save energy and cool its system. I tried very hard for it, and my experience was strange, because I had to vie with a virtual contestant in the semi-final competition.

**Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung:** I got this idea from a friend of mine and had to practise a lot. I had to collect data on creepers. I overcame all obstacles by using the effective Teaching Method Project of the USAID Organisation.

**Q:** Could you explain more about the nature of virtual competitions?

**Maung Phyto Thu Htet:** At the semi-final stage, there were 12 teams from various regions, such as Africa, America and other European countries. Therefore, I presented my project using the internet. There were sound recordings, films being shot, and question and answer sessions at the competition. As for me, I had to present my own project on behalf of my country.

**Q:** What benefits did you gain from this competition?

**Maung Phyto Thu Htet:** I believe that both my idea and creation can be transformed into a project, which can be beneficial to the country. Even though my idea is small, I had a good chance to present my creation to those from other countries in the world. Moreover, I could show off my talent and skills, which were useful and effective in the process of environmental conservation, through this competition. I had a great chance to represent our university and country.

**Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung:** This is my first experience and am very pleased to have taken part in this competition. My aim in life is to serve my country.

**Q:** And what are your ambitions?

**A:** I assume that I have to realise my ambitions. I shall try to create what I would like to be in my mind. I will make the best use of all my efforts to serve my society and country to the best of my abilities.

Thanks a lot for your answers, and may all your dreams come true as early as possible.



Maung Phyto Thu Htet and Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung. **PHOTO: HLA MOE**



# 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Day celebrated nationwide



A team of men grab the winning flag atop a greasy bamboo pole as they participate in the popular folk game held on Independence Day in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: NAY WIN TUN**



A team of women are urged on during their participations in a tug-of-war competition yesterday as part of the celebration of the 70th Independence Day in Kyonpyaw, Ayeyawady Region. **PHOTO: NAY WIN MYINT/IPRD**



Children play football on Ingapu Street in Sanchaung yesterday to mark Independence Day in Yangon. **PHOTO: MARK ANGELES**



Schoolchildren take part in a sack race at a regional ceremony held to mark the 70th anniversary of Independence Day in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: IPRD**



Two school children participate in the pillow fight game yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw to mark Independence Day. **PHOTO: IPRD**



Children participate in a race on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence Day in Yangon. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH**



Women take part in a race requiring them to balance a bowl on their heads in Maungtaw. **PHOTO: NAY WIN TUN**



## Sagaing United, MNL's newest team, to be officially introduced to public



Newest team of Myanmar National League, Sagaing United pose for their team's photo. **PHOTO:MNL**

Kyaw Zin Lin

THE introduction ceremony for Sagaing United, a new football team of the Myanmar National League (MNL), will be held at the team's home stadium on 11 January.

After the ceremony, Sagaing United will play their Week-1 Myanmar National League 2018 match against Rakhine United.

Sagaing FC will use Monywa football stadium, the stadium also used by ZeyyaShweMyay FC, as their home stadium.

The Sagaing FC, formerly known as Mahar United FC, secured second place in Myanmar National League MNL-2 and has stepped up to MNL-1.

The new team will be representing the Sagaing Region.

Many entertainment programmes will be included in the introduction ceremony, according to the MNL. ■

## Murray pulls out of Australian Open with hip injury

CANBERRA — Former world number one Andy Murray has pulled out of the Australian Open after failing to recover from a hip injury, tournament organisers said on Thursday.

The three-time grand slam winner has not played a competitive match since Wimbledon last July and despite coming through a one-set exhibition in Abu Dhabi last week, the Briton has decided to focus on rehabilitation.

"Sadly I won't be playing in Melbourne this year, as I am not yet ready to compete," Murray, a five-times Australian Open runner-up, said in a statement.

"I'll be flying home shortly to assess all the options but I appreciate all the messages of support and I hope to be back playing soon."

Australian Open tournament director Craig Tiley said: "We are fully aware that Andy has been going through a difficult period with his hip and that he's done everything possible to prepare for the Australian summer.

"Personally, I also know that Andy loves tennis and would do anything to play. This is a very



Great Britain's Andy Murray. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

hard decision for Andy and we totally respect it."

Murray has slipped to 16<sup>th</sup> in the world rankings since being beaten by American Sam Querrey in the Wimbledon quarter-finals.

The 30-year-old Briton attempted a comeback at the US Open in August but was forced to withdraw two days before the start of the tournament.

Another former world number one, Novak Djokovic, faces a race against time to recover from an elbow injury after pulling out of the Qatar Open.

Tiley confirmed both Djokovic and current world number

one Rafa Nadal, who is recovering from a knee injury, will be ready for the first grand slam of the year starting on 15 January.

"I spoke to Novak. He's already got every hour of the day planned between when he arrives and the start of the Australian Open. He'll be ready," Tiley said.

"(Rafa's) on his way down here now so he'll be ready. It's not dissimilar from last year... Last year we were talking about the health of Rafa Nadal, Roger Federer and Serena Williams and two weeks later they were playing each other in the final."

—Reuters ■

## Shan United ready for Charity Cup 2018

SHAN United FC, the proud football representative of the Shan people, is ready to compete against Yangon United in Charity Cup 2018 on Sunday, according to head coach U SoeMyat Min.

"The match is really a thrilling one, as one team is a tiger and the other is a lion. We have prepared with better composure than the previous season of the MNL. We will fight our best for the dignity and pride of our Shan fans. We have to show the football power and skill of being a champion of two cups last season", said Shan United head coach U SoeMyat Min.

Shan United is the champion of both the Myanmar National League (MNL) 2017 and the BogyokeAungSan Shield 2017.

The MNL champion traditionally plays the BogyokeAung San Shield champion in the Charity Cup, but because Shan United has won

both titles, their opponent will be Yangon United, the second place winner of the BogyokeAung San Shield 2017.

"There were very few training days with all team's players including expatriate players, national selected players and youth U-21 players.

But most of my boys are in professional level and they can access easy understanding in a very short time. There is no injury in our team and all are ready to play for our best", added U SoeMyat Min.

As I'm from Taunggyi, I love Shan United and I will be standing with my team along with its success, said Khun Ku Shar Lu, a Pa-O national ethnic who works in Yangon.

Shan United and Yangon United met three times last season, resulting in one win for each team and one draw. The match is on Sunday at 3.30 pm in Aung San Stadium in Yangon.— Kyaw Zin Lin ■