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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi departs from Changi International Airport in Singapore to Myanmar yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor returns after attending 33rd ASEAN Summit, nine related events

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi returned to Nay Pyi Taw from Singapore yesterday morning after attending the 33rd ASEAN Summit and related summits and a ceremony to hand over the duty of the ASEAN alternative chairmanship.

The State Counsellor and party were seen off at Singapore Changi International Airport by Mr. Zaqy Mohamad, Singapore Minister of State for the Ministry of National Development and the Ministry of Manpower and officials, Myanmar Ambassador to Singapore U Htay Aung and

wife, Military Attache (Army, Navy and Air) Col. Win Myat and wife and officials of the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore.

The State Counsellor and party reached Nay Pyi Taw at noon and were welcomed at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Union Minister U Kyaw Tint

Swe from the Office of the State Counsellor, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung and wife, Deputy Minister U Min Thu from the Office of the President and officials from the Singapore Embassy in Myanmar. — MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Min)

Myanmar, Bangladesh determined to implement bilateral agreement for return of displaced persons from Rakhine State

THE Government of Myanmar and the Government of Bangladesh have agreed to commence the repatriation of the first batch of verified displaced persons from 15 November 2018.

Although Myanmar had made the necessary preparations to receive some 150 persons as agreed with Bangladesh, the Bangladesh side has not yet repatriated the displaced persons citing the report of UNHCR, that there was no willingness on the part of these displaced persons.

On 16 November 2018, Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe and Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali of Bangladesh communicated to each other using the hot line established between them. Both Myanmar and Bangladesh reiterated their determination to implement the bilateral agreement “Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State” signed on 23 November 2017 wherein the return will be under safe, voluntary and dignified conditions.

It was understood that the present difficulties stem from the weakness in following the procedures laid down

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50 gem lots, 2186 jade lots sold out through open tender

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Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 10th regular session holds fourth meeting

By Aye Aye Thant (MNA)

THE Second Pyithu Hluttaw's tenth regular session held its fourth meeting at the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday. Asterisk-marked questions were answered, a motion was tabled, and a bill was approved at the meeting.

Asterisk-marked questions

U Aung Soe Min of Ywangan constituency asked whether the government plans to set up a Myinkyado station hospital in Ywangan Township, Union Minister for Health and Sports, Dr. Myint Htwe, replied there was a hospital and two station hospitals in Shan State (South) Ywangan Town with a population of over 80,000, while there were four sub-rural health centres under the Myinkyado Rural Health Centre.

"As it is better if there is another station hospital to handle patients that the present hospital cannot handle, and the place itself should have a station hospital, the

head of the State Public Health Department will be sent to study aspects such as road connectivity and possible sites for the station hospital. If it is budgeted for in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020, the necessary procedures will be followed to start work on the hospital," said the Union Minister.

U Sai Kyaw Moe of Mongpan constituency asked about the government's plans to upgrade a township sports field in Mongpan Town, to include a grand stand, a score board, and a four hundred meter track around it.

The Union Minister replied that money for the works will be allocated under Shan State's permitted funds in the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year. Once permission is granted, the upgradation work will begin, he said. Daw Khin Than Nu of Mindon constituency asked the government if it plans to assign additional medical personnel to Mindon Township People's Hospital to stand in for medical personnel who were attending a training. Union Minis-

ter Dr. Myint Htwe said the hospital sees 20 in-patients and about 9 out-patients on average per day, so it is adequately staffed despite the absence of staff attending a training. As the hospital is located in a difficult-to-travel area, the situation will be reviewed and discussions will be conducted with the head of the Region Public Health Department, he said. Based on the outcome, necessary action will be taken, he added.

U Aung Theik of Seikpyu constituency, U Shwe Hla @ U Shwe Hla Win of Thingangyun constituency, Dr. Daw Pyone of Indaw constituency, and U Myint Oo of Thanatpin constituency also raised questions during the session. They were also answered by Dr. Myint Htwe.

Motion to improve the lives of ethnic nationals in remote, far-off, and backward places

Afterwards, U Ar Moe Si of Khaunglanphu constituency tabled a motion urging the Union Government to draw up a plan



Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe.

to improve the lives of ethnic nationals living in remote, far-off, and backward places, where development is lagging. He also explained his reason for tabling the motion.

After obtaining its decision, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced the Hluttaw's agreement to accept and discuss the motion. He asked representatives who want to discuss the motion to register their names.

Approval of Traditional Medicine Council Bill and tabling of a motion on the bill

Later, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced the Hluttaw's approval of the Myanmar Traditional Medicine Council Bill, sent with amendments by the Amyotha Hluttaw.

Bill Committee member U Wei Hlaing Tun said the bill was approved with 43 amendments by the Bill Committee, while amendments made by the Amyotha Hluttaw were not approved. As this may lead to a disagreement between the two Hluttaws, he submitted a motion for the bill to be sent to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for discussion.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker then announced that the disagreements on the Bill will be submitted to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for discussion and decision.

The fifth meeting of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw's tenth regular session will be held on 20 November. ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Amyotha Hluttaw's 10th regular session holds fourth meeting

By Aung Ye Thwin

UNION Ministers answered asterisk-marked questions raised by representatives and the Gambling Bill 2018 was discussed at the Amyotha Hluttaw yesterday.

During the session, Daw Ma Ma Lay of Shan State Constituency and Parme 8 asked the government about its plans to provide electricity to the See Kya Inn, Myayni (South) villages in Pindaya Township, Danu Self-Administered Zone, Shan State.

Replying to her question, the Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy, Dr. Tun Naing, said that 66 / 11 kV of Pindaya will be distributed to three villages, including Seekyainn, Myayni (South), and Parmei villages. He said the NEP has been formulated to provide power supply in the first phrase. "A transformer will be built for Htut Ni village, and a 11 kV distribution power line (3.8 miles) and a 11/0.4 KVA transformer will be built for Seekya Inn Village. To provide power to Myayni (South) Village, a transformer will be built using 11 KV power line (0.5 miles), 11 / 0.4KV-100 KVA transformer through the Seekya Inn village. For Parmei village, a 11 KV power line (1.2 miles) and a 11 / 0.4 KV, 100 KVA transformer will be built to get power supply through Myayni



Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy Dr. Tun Naing.

(South) Village. Arrangements are currently being made to implement these schemes with KfW loans from Germany," he said.

No plan to build wind measurement towers in Chin State

U Bawi Khing of Chin State's Constituency 3 asked if the government planned to construct windmills in Chin State. Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy, Dr. Tun Naing, said eight Wind Measurement Towers had been set up in Lort Lan of Chin State, in Yebawgyi of Rakhine State, in Chaungtha of Ayeyawady Region and in Taungtat and Wathinka of Yangon Region by the China Three Gorges Corporation (CTGC). To study wind speed and pressure, the Asia Eco-energy Development and Primus



Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Dr. Ye Myint Swe.

Advanced Technologies Ltd. set up six Wind Measurement Towers in An Township of Rakhine State, besides Thandwe and Gwa townships, the deputy minister said.

"Based on their findings in Lord Lan of Chin State, it was held that the project is situated too far to be connected with the Transmission line, besides it poses transportation barriers. That's why there is no plan to build Wind Measurement Towers at the moment," he said.

Entrance fee to Nat Ma Taung National Park

Daw Khin Swe Lwin of Chin State Constituency 9 asked if the government plans to change the name of Nat Ma Taung National Park to Khaw Nu M' Cong National Park and whether it plans to

collect an entrance fee from visitors. Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Dr. Ye Myint Swe, said the ministry will seek suggestions from the Union Government in the matter.

In a move to help conserve the garden, an entrance fee of Ks10,000, or US\$10, per tourist was decided upon during a meeting of the Chin State government (27/2014), and the Chin State government will supervise this task, the deputy minister said.

Later, Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy Dr. Tun Naing answered questions raised by U Zung Hlei Thang of Chin State Constituency 4, U Myint Naing of Rakhine State Constituency 5, and U Tin Aung Tun of Magway Region Constituency 5.

Afterwards, Hluttaw representatives discussed the Gambling Bill 2018. U Kyaw Ni Naing of Shan State Constituency 11, Dr. Pyae Phyoe of Ayeyawady Region Constituency 7, U Than Soe alias Than Soe (Eco) of Yangon Region Constituency 4 and U Soe Thein alias U Maung Soe of Thaninthayi Region Constituency 10 participated in the discussion.

Action to be taken against poachers

Daw Thiri Yadana of Mon

State Constituency 12 tabled a motion, urging the Government to take action against poachers.

"According to data from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, it is estimated that around 116 elephants were killed for their ivory from 2010 through 2016. Of these, around 30 elephants were killed in 2017 alone. At this alarming rate, between 1,400 and 2,000 elephants are thought to be surviving in Myanmar's forests. Moreover, at least one elephant is killed every week," she said. "The extent of the killings is so great that experts have predicted the elephant population may be wiped out by 2030-2035. Although offences under Section 37 of the Protection of Wildlife Act are punishable with imprisonment of up to 7 years in Myanmar, it is found that hunting and trafficking of wildlife still continues, despite attempts to curb them. All are duty bound to take part and cooperate in tackling this problem," she added.

U Sa Khin Zaw Lin of Ayeyawady Region Constituency 2 supported the motion. Then Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced that Hluttaw accepted the motion for discussion. ■ (Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

Vice President U Myint Swe opens 7th MSMEs Product Exhibition & Competition in Yangon

THE Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Work Committee (MSMEDWC) Chairman Vice President U Myint Swe opened the 7th Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Product Exhibition & Competition (Yangon) at the Myanmar Expo Fortune Plaza (Exhibition Hall), Thakayta Township, Yangon yesterday.

First the opening ceremony of the 7th MSME Product Exhibition & Competition (Yangon) was held and Vice President U Myint Swe, Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Deputy Ministers U Aung Htoo and U Maung Maung Win and region government minister for planning and finance U Myint Thaung cut the ceremonial ribbon and posed for a commemorative group photo with attending guests.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Vice President U Myint Swe called on MSMEs in Myanmar to make the best use of digital technology as part of efforts for turning their businesses into a digital economy.

“In each country of the world businesses were conducted in many forms and had been transforming. Now is the time when information technology is used to transform towards a digital economy and MSMEs in our country need to strive towards going along with the transformation and to use digital technology in



Vice President U Myint Swe, centre, cuts ceremonial ribbon to open the 7th MSMEs Product Exhibition and Competition in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

their manufacturing, service and trading,” said the Vice President.

The aims for holding regional products exhibitions and competitions are to increase import substitute products, connect the manufacturing and trading sectors of the regions, MSMEs transforming from traditional family businesses to innovative businesses and to expand markets and cooperate in the global value chain.

“MSMEs are the driving engine to overcome the challenges faced in conducting the country’s economic development and to have a balanced economic and social development.

MSMEs are the market forces as well as productive forces and are a service link. As such regional products exhibitions and competitions were held to promote MSMEs and create opportunities for further progress,” said the Vice President.

Yangon Region is the most populous in Myanmar and is where most commercial businesses are based and Yangon is a commercial capital that mainly connects with local and foreign businesses. Yangon Region is considered a market where MSMEs’ trade, service and manufacturing were interlinked.

In addition to being strate-

gically placed, Yangon Region is where there is an international airport and a port where sea going ships dock and thus have better transportation, energy, basic infrastructures, have more opportunities to connect with local and foreign businesses and many job opportunities. Arrangements were made for Myanmar MSMEs to participate in foreign trade fairs in order to gain international experience and obtain new markets. Myanmar MSMEs exhibited their products at the 15th China-ASEAN Expo in Nanning and the 15th China International SME Fair (CISMEF) in Guangzhou during October and there were orders from China enabling increase in the manufacturing of products, it is learnt.

In addition to this, ten award winning MSMEs from Myanmar were sent to the Business Matching Meeting and New Value Creation Exhibition 2018 held for businesses of ASEAN countries and Japan in Tokyo, Japan from 11 to 17 November.

Kayin State and Mon State will jointly hold the event in Mawlamyine and in Myeik for Tanintharyi Region. Finally a national level products exhibition and competition involving all states and regions will be held in the Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory where National Awards will be presented. The 6th ASEAN Coordinating Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises meeting and related meetings were hosted by Myanmar in Nay

Pyi Taw from 5 to 9 November.

At those meetings development projects for MSMEs in ASEAN region were proposed, implemented, reviewed, matters relating to increasing production capability, technology and innovation, policies required to expand market, amendment legal frameworks, development of entrepreneurship and human resources were discussed.

For the development of MSMEs in Yangon Region support services were provided to connect with banks to obtain loans and supports. Today under the leadership of the Yangon Region Chief Minister, MSMEs with potential were selected and endorsed to get loans directly from the banks.

U Myint Swe also urged the Myanmar MSMEs to strive together towards becoming a MSME community that provide good products and services required by the market, support economic and social development and maintain the environment.

Next, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein explained about the status of works conducted for the development of MSMEs in the region.

Afterwards Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho, Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Deputy Ministers U Aung Htoo and U Maung Maung Win and region government minister for planning and finance U Myint Thaung accepted donations made by companies to conduct the exhibition and competition and presented certificates of honor to the donors in return.

Later, officials from Kanbawza Bank, Myanmar Citizens Bank, Small & Medium Industrial Development Bank (SMIDB), Asia Green Development Bank, AYA Bank and CB Bank presented bank loans to MSMEs in Yangon Region that had potential.

The 7th MSME Product Exhibition & Competition (Yangon) is being held at the Myanmar Expo Fortune Plaza in Thakayta Township, Yangon for three days from 16 to 18 November.

Vice President U Myint Swe, Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho and officials then attended the opening ceremony of SME Center held at the SMIDB on Pansodan Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon. — MNA ■
(Translated by Zaw Min)



Vice President U Myint Swe inspects products displayed at the 7th MSME Exhibition in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

ASEAN will continue to support Myanmar's efforts to address the Rakhine Issue

ASEAN welcomes Myanmar's invitation to the AHA Centre to dispatch a needs assessment team to identify possible areas of cooperation in Rakhine State



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a photo with other ASEAN leaders at the 33rd ASEAN Summit and related summits in Singapore. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Myanmar delegation led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, arrived back Nay Pyi Taw International Airport yesterday afternoon after attending the 33rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summits held in Singapore from 12 to 15 November 2018.

On 12 November 2018, the State Counsellor delivered a key note speech at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit with the theme "Business and Investment in Myanmar and ASEAN". On 13 November 2018, the State Counsellor attended the Opening Ceremony of the 33rd ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Summit Plenary and Working Dinner hosted by Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore together with other ASEAN Leaders.

On 14 November 2018, the State Counsellor attended the ASEAN-Australia Informal Breakfast Summit, 21st ASEAN-China Summit, 20th ASEAN-Republic of Korea Summit, Working Lunch hosted by Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong for ASEAN Leaders and Leaders of Guests of the ASEAN Chair, 3rd ASEAN-Russia Summit, 21st ASEAN-Japan Summit and 2nd Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Summit. Later in the evening, the State Counsellor attended the Gala Dinner hosted by Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong for ASEAN Leaders, Leaders of non-ASEAN EAS Participating Countries, and Leaders of Guests of the ASEAN Chair.

On 15 November 2018, the State Counsellor attended the ASEAN-India Informal Breakfast Summit, 6th ASEAN-US Summit, 21st ASEAN Plus Three Summit, East Asia Summit Lunch (Retreat) and 13th East Asia Summit (Plenary). The State Counsellor also attended the Closing Ceremony of the 33rd ASEAN Summits and Related Summits and Handing Over Ceremony of the ASEAN Chairmanship to the Kingdom of Thailand in the evening.

At the 33rd ASEAN Summit, the leaders discussed and exchanged views on matters relating to building a Resilient and Innovative ASEAN, ASEAN's external relations and future direction, regional and international issues. With regard to Rakhine issue, the ASEAN Leaders highlighted its complexity and noted the agreement between Myanmar and Bangladesh to commence the repatriation of the first batch of verified displaced persons to Myanmar. The Leaders recognized the need for ASEAN to play a role in rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance and welcomed the invitation extended by Myanmar to the AHA Centre to dispatch a needs assessment team to identify possible areas of cooperation in Rakhine State to facilitate the repatriation process. The ASEAN Leaders also expressed their continued support for Myanmar in its efforts to bring peace, the rule of law, to promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities and to ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends the 13th East Asia Summit held in Singapore. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the keynote speech at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit-2018 in Singapore. **PHOTO: MNA**

In response to the comments about Rakhine issue, the State Counsellor said that Myanmar listens to the voices of concern of some of our ASEAN friends and is grateful for the support to resolve the problem. She informed the meetings of the agreement made between Myanmar and Bangladesh to commence the repatriation of the first batch of displaced persons and explained that there are many areas which our ASEAN friends would like to help us in facilitating development, repatriation and enabling us to ensure security for all communities in Rakhine State. She said that Myanmar has been negotiating with ASEAN as to how AHA Centre could help to facilitate the repatriation process since it would be able to contribute not only in the way of helping us practically but also in the way of providing confidence for all around, making the displaced persons feel that they can be safe. She underscored the Government's continued efforts in ensuring the harmony and peace among different communities not only for the repatriation process but also for the future since they have to live together for many years.

At the conclusion of the ASEAN Summit, Chairman's Statement of the 33rd ASEAN Summit was issued in which the ASEAN Leaders expressed, inter alia, their readiness to support Myanmar in its repatriation process. They welcomed the invitation extended by Myanmar to the AHA Centre to dispatch a needs assessment team to identify possible areas of cooperation in Rakhine State to facilitate the repatriation process. They also welcomed Myanmar's commitment to ensuring safety and security for all communities in Rakhine State as effectively as possible. They also expressed their continued support for Myanmar's efforts to bring peace, stability, the rule of law, to promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities, as well as to ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.

At the East Asia Summit, some ASEAN dialogue partners expressed their concern on Rakhine issue and the importance of the voluntary return of displaced per-

sons in a safe, secure and dignified manner. Most of them welcomed the agreement between Myanmar and Bangladesh to commence the repatriation of the first batch of verified displaced persons to Myanmar. They expressed their readiness to support the efforts of Myanmar, ASEAN and international community in addressing the issue.

In response to the comments, the State Counsellor expressed her appreciation for the offer, constructive assistance and understanding towards Myanmar in addressing the issue. She stressed that it is the primary duty of Myanmar to ensure peace, stability, observance of human rights and rule of law in the country and expressed its continued commitment to take the duty seriously and do its best to discharge.

After the 33rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summits, the Leaders of ASEAN and Dialogue Partners issued, adopted and noted (63) documents which include, among others, the Declaration on the Guidelines on Consular Assistance by ASEAN Member States' Missions in Third Countries to Nationals of Other ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Smart Cities Framework, ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ASEAN Plus Three Leaders' Statement on Cooperation Against Antimicrobial Resistance, EAS Leaders' Statement on Combating Marine Plastic Debris, EAS Leaders' Statement on the Safe and Secure Use, Storage, and Transport of Nuclear and Other Radioactive Materials, EAS Leaders' Statement on Countering the Threat of Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Returnees.

The State Counsellor witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between ASEAN and the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) on Economic Cooperation together with the Heads of State/Government of the ASEAN Member States and the Russian Federation. The MOU will help ASEAN and EEC overcome the economic challenges arising out of protectionism, trade barriers and technological gaps.— Ministry of Foreign Affairs

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held bilateral talks with Chinese Premier, New Zealand Prime Minister, American Vice President on the sidelines of the 33rd ASEAN Summit

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held bilateral talks with H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the People's Republic of China, the Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand and H.E. Mr. Michael Pence, Vice-President of the United States of America separately on the sidelines of 33rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summits in Singapore.

During the meeting with the Chinese Premier on 15 November 2018, they exchanged views cordially on promotion of bilateral relations and co-operation including provision of assistance for Myanmar's peace and national reconciliation process, repatriation and resettlement of displaced persons from Rakhine State and continued cooperation between the two countries at the regional and international fora.

During the meeting with the Prime Minister of New Zealand on 14 November 2018, they exchanged views cordially on strengthening of bilateral relations, recent developments in Rakhine State including the preparation for the repatriation of displaced persons and lending support by New Zealand to the ongoing efforts for bringing harmony among the communities in Rakhine State. The two leaders also discussed how New Zealand could help

the Government of Myanmar in resolving the humanitarian issue.

During the State Counsellor's meeting with the Vice President of the United States on 14 November 2018, they frankly exchanged views on Myanmar's democratization process, media freedom, and recent developments in Rakhine State and some regional issues including the Indo-Pacific Strategy Concept.

The Vice President thanked the State Counsellor for reaching out to the United States and enquired about the steps taken by the Government of Myanmar in addressing the Rakhine issue including repatriation process and accountability of the reported human rights violations.

The State Counsellor informed the Vice President that as there are diverging views on resolving the issue, exchanging views would be useful to understand each other. As the Americans understand their own country better, Myanmar understands her own country better than anyone else. She explained that Myanmar Government has been trying to resolve the Rakhine issue as one of the top priorities, but our approach is different compared with the approach from international community.

State Counsellor explained,

inter alia, that the situation in Rakhine State is not a new issue that emerged recently. The present Government, since assuming the office, has been doing its best for peace, stability and rule of law in Rakhine State by forming a Central Committee, and in addressing the issue, the international community is focusing only on the rights of a particular community and they also needs to consider the complexities and the sensitivities of all communities in Rakhine State.

In fact, the populations of native Rakhine and other ethnic peoples are shrinking and they are becoming minority in Rakhine State.

State Counsellor also pointed out that while in the view of many countries, the Myanmar Government is biased for the Rakhine people, the Myanmar people view that the international community is totally biased in favour of the other community. She added that if Myanmar resolved the Rakhine issue in a short sighted approach, it would hurt the stability and the future of the country and that it would be no one else but our own people to suffer the consequences. She apprised him of the measures taken by Myanmar Government to start the repatriation of first batch of displaced persons from Rakhine State and to address the



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the People's Republic of China, (Right) in Singapore. **PHOTO: MNA**

accountability for alleged human rights violations through establishing an Independent Commission of Enquiry by the President.

The Vice President stressed the importance for

Myanmar to overcome the challenging issue of Rakhine State and expressed that the United States will continue to support for the success of Myanmar's democratization process. — Ministry of Foreign Affairs ■



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Vice-President of the United States of America Mr. Michael Pence in Singapore. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Prime Minister of New Zealand Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern in Singapore. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar, Bangladesh determined to implement bilateral agreement for return of displaced persons from Rakhine State

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in the “Physical Arrangement for Repatriation of Displaced Myanmar Residents” agreed between two countries on 16 January 2018. Under the Physical Arrangement, the forms for the prospective returnees have to be signed by the displaced person themselves, signifying their willingness to return voluntar-

ily to Rakhine State. This was not done in the case of the 2,260 people whose forms were sent to Myanmar including the 150 people interviewed by UNICEF.

It was also understood that the next batch of some 22,000 forms recently sent to Myanmar, have indeed been signed by the displaced persons themselves. It was also confirmed that 440 displaced persons of the Hindu

faith have volunteered to come back as soon as possible and that they will be included in the first batch of verified returnees.

During the communications, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh intimated to the Union Minister, that because of the imminent Bangladesh elections, the repatriation could only start after the end of December 2018.—MNA ■

Union Ministers inspect Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre

UNION Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspected Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre which is ready to conduct repatriation and resettlement of returnees from Bangladesh.

During their tour of inspection, they were also accompanied by deputy ministers who are chairmen of committees formed to carry out receiving and resettlement of returnees.

The Union Ministers and party inspected readiness for repatriation process, the place for reception, accommodation for returnees, processes to be conducted, the status of completed construction of shelters, health care services and

access to safe drinking water, access to electricity, the sufficiency of fly-proof toilets, safety measures against fire, preparation for cleaning around the camp and processes undergo afterward and officials of the camp provided necessary explanations.

The Ministers and party checked Assemble Board Houses donated by the People's Republic of China, the status of construction of sample rural houses, opening clinics for their health care and schools.

The Ministers and officials also went to the Byinphyu border police outpost and inspected the construction of garage for storing dry rations.—MNA ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Union Minister U Win Khaing inspects Thaton electric power plant



PHOTO: MNA

UNION MINISTER for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing yesterday inspected a power plant project which is on test-run at Kyapan Village, Thaton Township, to supply electricity to eight townships in Kayin State.

The plant, which has been came into operation since 1985

with a 18.45 MW gas turbine and another two gas turbines which can produce total 16.25 MW supplying power to Mon and Kayin states. Thaton Power Plant is being upgraded and equipped with gas turbine and steam turbine manufactured by the General Electric-GE by the China Energy Engineering Corporation Ltd.

gy Engineering Corporation Ltd.

The work on upgrading the plant started in March 2016, and the plant, which is currently under test run, is expected to generate 118.9 MW in February next year. Upon completion of the project, the plan will benefit 399 villages in eight townships in Kayin State. To transport the electricity generated by the plant to Kayin State, nine mile-long 230 KV cables and a 230/66 KV 60 MVA sub power station are being constructed at Indu Town, Kayin State.

Meanwhile, a 230-KV transmission line linking Mawlamyine and Myawady and a 230 KV 100 MVA sub-power station are being constructed in Myawady, and the construction are expected to be finished in march 2019.—MNA ■ (Translated by JT)



Union Ministers U Thein Swe and Dr. Win Myat Aye, and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspect Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Rakhine repatriation: Media visit Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre

A team of journalists from 12 domestic news agencies arrived in Sittway yesterday to observe preparations for the return of displaced people to Rakhine State from Bangladesh.

The journalists travelled to Maungdaw Township in the afternoon and visited the Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre and the Kanyinchaung Economic Zone.

They met with District Administrator U Soe Aung and asked questions on arrangements made by the government to receive the displaced people, the reason for the delay in the repatriation process, Myanmar's plans for the resettlement and rehabilitation of returnees, the current state of stability in the area, freedom of movement for the returnees, construction

of houses, upgradation of transport in Maungdaw District, and the status of development projects in Rakhine State.

Next, the media group visited the Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre and saw the temporary accommodations set up for returnees there.

The journalists also met with the centre's director U Soe Shwe Aung and questioned him about the centre's preparations for repatriation.

He told them about the arrangement of facilities such as housing, drinking water, and electricity, and installation of septic tanks at the centre.

He also detailed plans for providing food, assistance, medical centres, temporary schools, and playgrounds, at the reception centre.

The group of journalists then travelled to the Kanyinchaung Economic Zone.

Yesterday's trip marks the media's 28th news gathering visit to Maungdaw District in Rakhine State. Journalists from Mizzima TV, Irrawaddy, The Daily Eleven, the Myanmar Times, Forever, DVB, Sky Net, Frontier, MRTV, MITV, MNTV, and MNA took part in the trip.

Local and foreign media agencies have been sent to Rakhine State to gather news 6 times during the emergency period, once with arrangements from the Ministry of Defence, 6 times from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, once from the Union government, once from the Myanmar Press Council, and 13 times on the advice of the Com-

mittee for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State, which recommended two

media trips a month to Rakhine State.—MNA ■ / (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



District Administrator U Soe Aung interviewed by journalists at Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre in Rakhine State. PHOTO: IPRD

China, Middle East demand for striped catfish grows, stokes breeder interest

By May Thet Hnin

WITH the demand for striped catfish witnessing a growth in China and countries from the Middle East, breeders in Myanmar are being urged to increase production, according to the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF).

Myanmar's striped catfish has now a great demand from China and the Middle East countries. Starting last month, Myanmar has shipped about 8 containers of striped catfish to China and about 14 containers to countries in the Middle East.

At present, Myanmar is exporting scraped striped catfish meat and ready-to-eat products. Some Chinese companies want to purchase striped catfish skin, oil, and swim bladder.

Striped catfish started to penetrate the export market last year. As demand for the fish has been growing significantly, the MFF has been urging fish farmers to increase area under striped catfish production in the past few months. As a result, the



Freshwater catfishes are seen at a small-scale fish farm.

PHOTO: MYINT OO (MYEIK)

number of striped catfish farmers is estimated to have risen by 40 per cent, said U Zaw Lin.

"China has shown a strong interest in striped catfish. However, we still cannot cater to the size and volume that they want," said U Zaw Lin, treasurer of the MFF and a breeder.

According to breeders, farmers can harvest striped catfish three times a year, as they grow faster than other species. The fish is also resistant to disease, therefore, farming striped

catfish can help farmers reap great profits, said breeders.

"The striped catfish now has a strong market. Only the production needs to satisfy the demand," said U Win Kyaing, the general secretary of the MFF.

Besides the export market, the demand for striped catfish among local consumers and dried fish processors has also been growing. This being so, the current market price of striped catfish is higher than in the previous years. The export price is

Ks200 higher than the domestic market prices.

Breeders primarily farm 65 per cent of rohu, 15 per cent of striped catfish, 7 per cent of freshwater silver, and 4 per cent of white mrigal carp, while the rest 9 per cent constitutes other fish species.

Local breeders are still watching the market as the record export of striped catfish has not been seen before. Exporters are also hesitating to export them while production is still low.

"With the emergence of a strong market, all stakeholders in the supply chain, including exporters, suppliers, and breeders need to be engaged. It will be better if the Fisheries Department conducts tours to raise awareness on striped catfish farming among breeders. Supply chain management - from farming to consumption and export - is required. With the engagement of stakeholders, a stronger market will emerge. At present, stakeholder involvement is still poor," said U Zaw Lin, a breeder.

Rohu and mrigal carp are the main items on Myanmar's fish exports. Rohu prices have plunged because of Saudi Arabia's restriction on rohu importation this year, and breeders are suffering. The fish market is expected to recover once Myanmar begins exporting fishery products to the European Union from 1 December.

To ensure food safety, the European market requires suppliers to have Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Good Aquaculture Practice (GAQP) certificates. Myanmar has only a small number of entrepreneurs who hold those certificates, so, fish breeders are prepping for this. An MFF delegation went on a study tour to striped catfish farms in Viet Nam last April.

Myanmar still lags several supplier countries in using advanced fish farming technology, said Daw Toe Nanda Tin, the vice president of the MFF. Capital investment in the sector is also insufficient, she said. ■

(Translated by Ei Mon)

Myanmar Commerce Fair 2018 to be held at Yangon Convention Center

By Nyein Nyein

THE Myanmar Commerce Fair 2018 will be held at the Yangon Convention Center on 1 and 2 December. The fair is being organized jointly by the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union, the Myanmar Accountancy Council, the Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and the Commerce Graduates' Association (Myanmar).

The organizers held a press conference to announce the event at the Novotel hotel on 15 November.

"The fair is being organized to support national socio-economic development, and aims to bring participants from the State, cooperative and private sectors together to build a network and strengthen the social economic sector," said Daw Khin Mar Cho, the director of the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union, Myanmar Accountancy Council.

At the event, lectures will be conducted on every sector of the economy. There will lectures on 'Union Budget and Fiscal Transparency/ Pres-



Press conference of the Myanmar Commerce Fair 2018 opened in Yangon on 15 November. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

entation on MSDP', 'Current Economic Affairs in Myanmar', 'Facts to know about Trade Policy', 'Myanmar Taxation and Future Tax Policy', 'Banking and Finance/ Banking Sector Development', 'Investment and Companies Affairs', 'Insurance and Financial Sector: Opportunities and Challenges', 'Anti-Corruption and Anti-Bribery', 'Future Transformation of the Digital Economy in Myanmar', 'Implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards' and 'International Standards on Auditing- Current and Future Impact on the Accounting Profession'.

"When we planned the lectures, we thought of involvement from every sector. We have a limited time of only two days. We have thought of topics which we believe can attract audiences and which are in harmony with the current situation," said Dr. Tin Latt, the vice chairman of the Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

The fair will also have 120 exhibition booths from all business sectors, including 27 stalls from government departments and the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union. ■

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Fishery exports show small increase

MYANMAR'S fishery exports in the first month of the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year have reached US\$99.5 million, up by \$19.4 million from the same period in the 2017-2018 FY, according to data released by the Commerce Ministry.

At present, Myanmar exports only raw fish materials. It needs to include value-added products to the export basket to develop the sector.

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation is making concerted efforts to adopt advanced farming technologies to develop the fisheries export sector.

At present, fishery products, including prawns, crabs, squid, eels, shrimp, dried shrimp, and dried fish, are being exported to Thailand through the Kawthoung and Myeik border trade gates and to China through the Muse gate.

They are also shipped to

several foreign markets such as Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. However, exports to Western countries are still limited due to high food safety standards.

About 568,227.327 metric tons of fishery products, worth \$717.7 million, were exported to Myanmar's foreign trade partners in the 2017-2018 FY.

The figure is the highest in terms of volume in 20 years, according to a release from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation. During the past mini-budget period (April to September), exports of fishery products topped \$297 million.

There are over 408,000 acres of fish and prawn lakes spread across Myanmar, according to the Department of Fisheries. — GNLM ■

(Translated by Ei Mon)

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Myanmar's economic landscape diversifies

THE Central Bank of Myanmar has issued a directive on 8 November, permitting foreign banks to lend to local businesses in Myanmar kyats. This will provide local businesses access to much-needed financing and other banking services as local banks are not as developed or ready to offer the services, said Central Bank of Myanmar Vice Governor U Soe Thein.

The Vice Governor remarked that foreign banks can no longer be restricted from doing business in Myanmar and we must focus on building up the financial sector as a whole.

Banking services are important in nearly all business ventures, from trading and social enterprises to administrative tasks and daily public transactions. As Myanmar's social and economic landscape continues to grow, interaction between the people and banks is increasing day by day. At present, there are 4 state-owned banks, 27 local private banks, and 13 foreign bank branches in the country.

Managing foreign investments flowing into the country requires more skilled banks that are firm enough to handle the increased money supply in the country. This is why the state is setting economic policies that encourage the growth of both domestic and foreign banks.

Not too recently, on 2 November, the Myanmar Investment Commission – (MIC) gave approvals to ten enterprises, including education and health services. The decision is expected to create about 800 jobs for local people and will contribute to the increase in money supply.

Between 1988 and the period before the new administration took office, Myanmar had over a thousand foreign businesses investing above US\$64 billion in the country. In the two-year timeframe of the new government's administration, 360 additional foreign businesses have increased foreign investments by US\$12 billion.

More businesses and overseas corporations are expected to foray into Myanmar with the country's leaders and high-ranking officials offering cordial invitations to businesses and entrepreneurs during their visits abroad.

U Thaug Tun, Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government and MIC Chairman, extended a similar invitation recently at the inaugural Singaporean Association of Myanmar (SAM) Business Summit, held at the LOTTE Hotel in Yangon on 15 November.

"With a fast-growing consumer market and industry sectors which require development, Myanmar is attracting large MNCs in a number of sectors including oil and gas, finance, construction, transport, logistics, telecommunications, and tourism. Myanmar's economic potential is well-recognised but we will need to take a proactive approach to secure investments," said U Thaug Tun.

A growing foreign investment scene requires more than 13 foreign banks to handle it. External investors will want to work with their banks of choice, and giving foreign banks nearly as much authority as local banks is a wise tactic.

Not only will this create more business opportunities in the country, it will undoubtedly increase national economic development and elevate the livelihood of the people as well.

As we have agreed since several months ago to repatriate returnees, we have already completed preparations for receiving them

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye

Interviewer –
Zin Oo (Myanma Alin)

IN accord with the agreement reached between Myanmar and Bangladesh and according to the list provided by Bangladesh, Myanmar was ready to receive 2,251 returnees as a first batch on 15 November. But there were no returnees. The following is an interview with Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, who chairs the Repatriation and Resettlement Committee.

"We are here in Taung Pyo-Letwe to receive the displaced people. According to agreements reached between Myanmar and Bangladesh, we will scrutinize the list if it is provided by Bangladesh and see whether the people have really lived in Myanmar. If we find people who were involved in terrorist acts, then they will be repatriated to the other country."

Agreement reached to repatriate 150 people a day

"According to the repatriation list, we are ready to receive the returnees in Nga Khu Ya centre by water route and Taung Pyo Letwe centre by inland route. Our two countries have agreed to receive 150 people a day at the centres. We have said that the repatriation process must be voluntary, safe and dignified. Myanmar and Bangladesh have both signed for collaboration with UNDP and UNHCR to ensure a smoother process."

Joint Working Group Agreed by both sides

"This measure is taken to ensure the process from our side is comprehensive. There is a clause in the agreement that states the preparation for repatriation pro-

cess needed to be ready by 23 January. We acted on the agreement and completed two repatriation centres and the Hla Pho Khaung transit centre by 23 January. The other country also did their part but since they were not ready, the repatriation process could not begin. And there is also a Joint Working Group and groups agreed by Myanmar and Bangladesh."

"These groups hold regular meetings on repatriation and resettlement. We received an offer at the last meeting on 30 October. The offer arranged for the repatriation of 2,251 people as a first batch in mid-November. They offered that they would repatriate the returnees in accord with the list we have scrutinized. We were already ready for the process so we agreed."

We are ready

"We made announcements agreed upon and informed other areas. We really are ready. We personally checked the readiness last week. The date was then set as 15 November. On 12 November, the director-general of Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry met the Myanmar ambassador and discussed matters on repatriation for 15 November. The director-general confirmed that the repatriation process will really take place on 15 November. He asked what time the returnees should begin returning and which officials will be present during the process. We replied that the best time for repatriation would be between 7 am to 5 pm."

"For Myanmar's side, there's a Repatriation and Resettlement Committee and two working committees. The chairman of the committees are the deputy minister for home affairs and the Rakhine state



Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief & Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye. PHOTO: SOE AUNG

minister for security and border affairs.

Ready to accomplish mission

"The Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement chairs the Resettlement Committee and the state electricity and transportation minister is also in the committee. We informed them that we will make arrangements for repatriation based on the agenda of the other side. The President's Office also issued an office letter regarding the readiness of the process. All the committees are ready to accomplish the mission and that is why we are here."

"According to news reports, we heard that there was no readiness for the process. First, we heard there would be no repatriation. Then about 2 pm, we were informed that they would continue the process. But till in the evening no one appeared. After that, we heard that Bangladesh Foreign Ministry would hold a press conference at about 4.30 pm Myanmar Standard Time. We will act accordingly as the situation proceeds."

Repatriation process was agreed several months ago

"We are carrying out the process based on mutual agreement. We pay attention to voluntary, safe and dignified return. We do believe that the other side would prepare facts and data systematically. We made all arrangements as we believed that they would send the

"The visit is aimed at recognizing the repatriation process. Arrangements have been made for the representatives' visit. They will come soon. For further cooperation, a team will come from ASEAN. This shows ASEAN's support towards cooperation with Myanmar. We have done everything we need to do. The Bangladesh government needs to cooperate in a systematic repatriation process. Only then can we say the process is comprehensive. I would like to express here is that we practice transparency in dealing with international community."

There are many hindrances for repatriation process

"The repatriation process is not a smooth process. There are many hindrances. There are three types of displaced people over there. One of the type sees a lot of support for displaced people being offered in Bangladesh. They get daily allowance. Some have announced that they may be allowed to enter a third country. These factors may delay the repatriation process. In retrospect, the two communities have been living together without harmony. We are trying to make coordinations regarding this matter too."

Innocent villagers have become scapegoats

"The terrorist attacks on the 30 police posts gradually led to people leaving in large numbers. So we sought suggestions from the Kofi Annan Commission. While trying to implement this, there were attacks by ARSA. Many innocent villagers have become scapegoats during these attacks.

Because they were included in recruitment attempts, some of them are included in the list of terrorists."

ARSA associates attempt to prevent repatriation

"This can be the second reason why those who are related with ARSA are facing difficulties to participate in repatriation process. There are many people who

wish to come back. They contacted us through Viber. They said they want to come back, but are facing difficulties. They face difficulties even in filling the forms. There are disturbances in filling the forms. Those who are associated with ARSA are trying to prevent everything. There have been torturing and killings. I believe everyone has heard of this. Although they want to come back, they are afraid of doing so. These are the barriers."

Success needs to be achieved

"Displaced persons are facing difficult situation even in the process of filling forms, which have been agreed by the two countries. Here, I would like to express that Bangladesh's cooperation is needed. They have the same goal as us, that's why they are cooperating but they need to make success a reality." "It is our knowledge that the list we have sent has been forwarded to UNHCR. Their cooperation is important for accomplishing the mission."

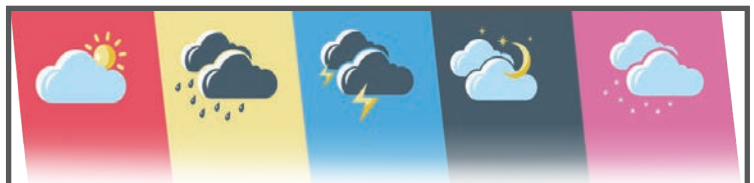
UN's many cooperation

"We have focused on sustainable freedom from conflicts and safety. The implementation of suggestions made by Kofi Annan's commission is to bring about peace and prosperity in the whole state. Matters relating to citizenship, freedom to travel, closing old refugee camps have been addressed together with UNHCR. UN has cooperated with us in many cases. National level strategic plans have been made to close the camps."

Creating a peaceful and prosperous region

"Our friends are with us. For our part, we have created good opportunities better than ever. We tried our best for better transportation and power supply system for the whole Maungdaw District. If Bangladesh, UNDP, UNHCR and the international community all cooperate in the process, then it will be truly successful."

(Translated by Wallace)



Cyclonic Storm News

16 November 2018, 11:00 MST Today

Cyclonic Storm

According to the observations at (10:30)hrs MST today, the Severe Cyclonic Storm "Gaja" has crossed Tamilnadu coast between Nagapattinam and Vedaranniyam weakened into a Cyclonic Storm "Gaja". It is forecast to move Westwards and weaken gradually.

This is the last news for Severe Cyclonic Storm "Gaja".

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued on Friday 16 November 2018)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs MST: During the past (24) hours, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Nay Pyi Taw and Kachin State, scattered in Eastern Shan State and widespread in Taninthayi Region and Southern Shan State. Weather has been partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states. Night temperatures were (3°C) below November average temperature in Northern Shan State, (3°C) to (4°C) above November average temperatures in (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Mon states and (2°C) above November average temperatures in Mandalay and Bago regions, Kayah and Kayin states and about November average temperatures in the remaining regions and states. The significant night temperatures were (3°C) in Haka, (7°C) each in Hsipaw and PyinOoLwin and (8°C) in Mogoke. The noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded were Dawei (0.67) inch, Myeik (0.63) inch, Pinlaung and Monghsat (0.32) inch each.

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and East central Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 17 November 2018: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State, isolated in (Southern and Eastern) Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Lower Sagaing and Magway regions, Rakhine State and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Lower Sagaing and Mandalay regions, Shan, Chin and Kayah states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 November 2018: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 November 2018: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 November 2018: Generally fair weather.

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Region, partly cloudy in Yangon Region.

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106 persons from IDP Camp in Sittway found on boat near Kyauktan

AUTHORITIES seized a boat carrying 106 persons near the mouth of the Yangon River near Thante Village, Kalardan Village-tract, Kyauktan Township, Yangon Region, early yesterday morning.

After local authorities found the boat, it was inspected by a combined team led by the head of the Kyauktan Township's General Administration Office, and comprising officials of the Kyauktan Township's Police Force and the Kyauktan Township Immigration and Population Department. Officials found the boat carrying 50 men, 31 women, 13 boys, and 12 girls left the Narzi IDP camp, Rakhine State, on 22 October and was on its way to Thailand and Malaysia when it ran out of fuel. The boat's passengers



People found on the boat near the mouth of Yangon River are brought to the cyclone shelter at Thante Village in Kyauktan Township. **PHOTO: MNA**

were taken to the cyclone shelter at Thante Village and were

provided with care. Officials are continuing their investigations

in the case. — MNA
(Translated by JT)

50 gems lots, 2186 jade lots sold out through open tender

A total of 50 gems lots and 2,186 lots have already sold out through open tender at the Mani Yadanar Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

The yesterday sales of the Gems and Jade Emporium fetched over 17.464 billion kyats from the sale of 1,062 jade lots.

Out of 1,150 jade lots put on sales, 1,124 jade lots found buyers for 16.752 billion kyats on 15 November.

So far, 50 gems lots and 2,186 jade lots found buyers through the open tender system.

On 14 November, 96 gems lots were put on sales through the open tender system and the emporium made 794.90 million kyats from the sales



Gems merchants evaluate raw jade stones at Gems Emporium in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

of 50 gems lots.

Over 1030 jade lots were set

to go on sale through the open tender system till 17 Novem-

ber.—Maw Si (MNA) / (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin) ■

Women arrested with drugs worth Ks150 million in Patheingyi

DURING a combined operation, members of the Anti-drug Squad and Customs authorities seized drugs worth over Ks150 million from two women travelling on a bus in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region, early on Thursday morning. The two women were arrested and charged with smuggling under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Around 1 am on Thursday morning, officials raided a bus at the Kyaukchaw checkpoint in Pathiengyi Township. They found

50,000 yaba pills hidden inside the bags of two women passengers. Ma Aye Nang, of Nanton Village, in Mongyai Township, Lashio District, Shan State, was found carrying 30,000 tablets. Ma Na Oo, 18, of Wunhlaing Village in Mongshu Township, Loilem District, Shan State, was found with 20,000 tablets. Police are continuing their investigation to find others connected with the drug-trafficking case.—Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay) ■ (Translated by KTL)

Truck transporting 48 bulls illegally seized in Bamauk

ACTING on a tip, police seized a truck transporting 48 bulls illegally in Bamauk Township, Katha District, Sagaing Region, on Thursday afternoon. The bulls, worth over Ks24 million, were being taken from Homalin Township to Mohnyin Township in Kachin State, said police.

Police found the truck carrying the bulls in the forest near Nanmu creek in the area between Bamauk and Homa-

lin townships around 1 pm on Thursday.

They have arrested eight persons, who have been identified as Aik Maw, Win Naing, Maung Mae, Than Hsaung, Win Tun, Hsan Lwin, Naing Tun, and Kyaw Kyaw.

They have been charged with violation of Section 5 of the Essential Supply and Services Law.—Ni Toe ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets GIZ program head



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat receives GIZ Head of Program Mr. Armin Hofmann. **PHOTO: MNA**

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat met with Mr. Armin Hofmann, the Head of Program of Germany-based GIZ, at the guest hall of the Pyithu Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, U T Khun Myat and Mr. Armin Hofmann discussed the development of Myanmar's banking and financial system, the small and medium enterprises in the country, the technology sector, and

cooperation between GIZ and the Hluttaw.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and officials from the Hluttaw office also attended the meeting.—MNA ■ (Translated by Thanda Aung)

MIC approves seven projects on 16 Nov.

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) meeting (19 / 2018) was convened at the meeting room of the MIC in Yangon on 16 November, 2018. The meeting approved seven projects in agriculture, livestock and manufacturing sectors, which will create 5,493 job opportunities for citizens.

The meeting was attended by U Thaung Tun, Chairman of MIC and nine members.—MNA



Myanmar Investment Commission Chairman U Thaung Tun. **PHOTO: MNA**

MoI holds 6th coord meeting on 7th Media Development Conference

The 6th coordination meeting to discuss preparations for the 7th Conference on Media Development in Myanmar was held at the Chatrium Hotel yesterday afternoon. Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun and officials from the Ministry of Information, the Vice Chairman of the Myanmar Press Council, Dr. Myo Thant Tin, and officials from partner organizations such as DW Akademie, IMS, JICA, Internews, My-pol, UNESCO, BBC, and Mizzima News attended the meeting.

At the meeting, participants discussed the program for the 7th Media Development Conference,

which is to be held at the Nay Pyi Taw Park Royal Hotel on 5 December. They also discussed the guest list and the list of people

who will conduct discussions at the conference.—MNA ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Maung)



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun holds the meeting with personnel from private media over preparation for holding 7th Conference on Media Development. **PHOTO: MNA**

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 39/2018
9th Waxing of Tazaungmone, 1380 ME
(16 November 2018)

Appointment of Mon State Security and Border Affairs Minister

Col Win Naing Oo, Mon State Security and Border Affairs Minister, has been returned to unit to perform the original military duties, and in accordance with the provisions stated in article 262 (a) sub-section (2), (b) (e) (f), article 264 (c) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 19 (c), section 82 (c) of Union Government Law and Section 8 (a) Sub-section (2) (b) (f) (g), Section 56 (a) of Region or State Government Law, Colonel Nay Htut Oo, from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) has been appointed as Mon State Security and Border Affairs Minister of the Mon State Government.

Sd/ Win Myint

President

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

53rd ASEAN-COCI delegates tour Nay Pyi Taw

REPRESENTATIVES from the ASEAN Secretary-General's Office and delegates from ASEAN countries visited the Thatta Thattaha Pagoda (Buddha Gaya), the Defence Services Museum, the Gem Museum, the National Museum, and the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi

Taw yesterday. The delegates had come to the city to attend the 53rd ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI) meeting hosted by Myanmar recently. Later, the ASEAN representatives and delegations left for their respective countries.—MNA ■

Myanmar, Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrols

A COORDINATED patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted from border post 48 to 49 yesterday, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Captain Myint Maung from No. 1 Border Police Force, Area 5, Maungtau Township, Rakhine State, while the Bangladesh side was led by Naib Subedar Md. Mozammel of No. 11 Bhalukhaiya outpost.

Similarly, troops led by Police Inspector Thein Tun Myint of Taung Pyo police post in Maungtau Town, conducted a coordinated patrol with troops led by Naib Subedar Md. Mah-

bubur Rahman of Baishfari police post of Bangladesh from border post 36 to 38 from 9 am to 11:20 am yesterday.

A troop led by Police Inspector Myo Thein Oo, No. 2 Border Police force, Ywet Nyo Taung police post in area 5, Maungtau, on two boats met up with its counterpart of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB-2) led by Naib Subedar Sha-Alam on two motor boats. The four boats patrolled on the border of the two countries in the middle of the Naf River, at 11 nautical mile and the two troops held a meeting on boat 005.—GNLM ■ (Translated by Thandar Aung)



Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung inspects regional development in Southern Shan State, Pa’O Self-Administered Zone

UNION MINISTER for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung accompanied by Shan State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Hla Oo, Minister for the transport and communication U Khun Ye Htwe and Eastern Command Deputy Commander Brig-Gen Win Zaw Moe inspected Kyaukgu–Naung Woe road in Yaksawk Township, Southern Shan State and Pa’O Self-Administered Zone on 14 November.

They inspected the completion status of constructing (5/0) mile asphalt road, (15/0) mile gravel road constructed with fund from fiscal year 2017-2018 and two 25-ft concrete bridges and three 8 ft. box culverts constructed with first six months fund from fiscal year 2018-2019. The Union Minister coordinated on matters submitted by officials.



Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung and officials inspect an asphalt road under construction in Southern Shan State. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Union Minister and party then went to inspect Nyint Sin-Pan Wut-Kone Sar earth road and the completion of (2/0) mile gravel road constructed with first six months fund of FY 2018-2019. They also inspected (3/0) mile gravel road under construction in FY 2018-2019 and instructed to complete within the specified time and to construct properly. Once the Nyint Sin-Pan Wut-Kone Sar road is completed, travel from Shan State (South) Indaw and Kyaukgu Area to Shan State (North) Hsipaw and Lashio

can be conducted in a short time.

Later in the afternoon the Union Minister and party reached the construction site of Kyaukgu-Htamin Paung-Kyauk Mhee Khat- Mayin Kone road in Yaksawk Township and inspected the completed (3/0) mile gravel road built with the first six months fund of FY 2018-2019 and (2/0) mile gravel road to be constructed with fund of FY 2018-2019.

On 15 November the Union Minister went to the construction site of (4/0) mile Taunggyi-Pantin-Phetkun-Linle-Zale asphalt road in Taunggyi Township, Shan State (South) built with fund from FY 2016-2017. They then went to inspect to the workplace of the completed (3/0) mile Nantpawhon-Parpant-Thettha-Pone Chaung earth road in Hopong Township, Pa’O Self-Administered Zone built with the first six months fund of FY 2018-2019 and coordinated on the necessities it is learnt. — MNA

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Seven fishermen brought back from Port Blair

SEVEN fishermen from Myanmar who were detained at Open Distress Camps in India returned home on 15 November after serving their prison terms in India for illegally entering the country’s territorial waters.

The return of the fishermen comes after several rounds of negotiation between the Consular and Legal Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Indian authorities. Authorities welcomed the fishermen at the Yangon International Airport and offered them assistance.

“Of the seven fishermen, one is from Yangon, one is from Rakhine State, and five hail from the Ayeyawady Region. We will send them back to their homes,” said U Tin Hlaing, Head of Yangon Region’s Disaster Management Department.

The fishermen were released from Port Blair Island after serving a sentence of two and a half years in prisons in India.

“My fishing boat’s engine broke down and we were arrested while floating in the Indian territorial waters. We served a sentence of two and



Authorities welcome the fishermen previously detained in Port Blair. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

a half years,” said Saw Herry Lin, a fisherman from Labutta, Ayeyawady Region.

Myanmar’s diplomats in India are making efforts to bring back the remaining fishermen from the camps as soon as possible.—Zaw Gyi

(Translated by JT)

Plan for oil refinery zone in Pakokku

THE Magway region’s government is planning to set up an refinery zone on 200 acres of government-owned land west of the industrial training center located 8 miles from Pakokku Town in the region.

“The objective behind establishing the new oil refinery zone is to produce good quality gasoline,” said U Myint Zaw, Magway Region’s Minister for Natural Resources, Environmental, Electricity, and Energy.

Currently, six companies have sought permission from the region’s government to operate oil refineries, said the minister.

“The authorities are planning to allow investors to carry out refining activities on 15 acres of land. The region’s government will give investors access to land and electricity. In addition, investors will also get technical support from the Union government,” he said.

“Everyone is being allowed to apply for setting up oil refineries in the zone. Some companies have applied for the project, while some others, including a Chinese company, have shown an interest in carrying out oil refining in the zone,” he added—Zeyatu (Magway)

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Arrival of foreign visitors to Myanmar

Sr.	Subject	2017(Up to Oct)	2018(Up to Oct)	Increase	Percentage
1	Arrival by air	1039490	1042756	3266	(+)0.30%
2	Arrival by cruise ship	5340	7139	1798	(+)3.66%
3	Arrival at border gate and travel into the country	30070	35377	5307	(+)0.30%
	Arrival by visa	1074901	1085272	10374	(+)0.30%
4	Visit border only	1735288	1759236	23948	(+)0.30%
	Total	2810189	2844508	34319	

No.	Nationality	2017(Up to Oct)	2018(Up to Oct)	difference	Percentage
	North America	68259	58280	-9979	-14.62%
1	America	51945	49705	-2240	-4.31%
2	Canada	16314	8575	-7739	-47.44%
	Other Americas	10154	8490	-1664	-16.39%
	West Europe	187707	138545	-49162	-26.19%
1	France	45441	32957	-12844	-28.27%
2	U.K	38387	29291	-9096	-23.70%
3	Germany	31197	21091	-10106	-32.39%
4	Italy	13298	11607	-1691	-12.72%
5	Switzerland	9952	7154	-2798	-28.11%
6	Netherlands	10879	7393	-3486	-32.04%
7	Belgium	5653	4287	-1366	-24.16%
8	Austria	3331	2437	-894	-26.84%
9	Spain	11317	9010	-2307	-20.39%
10	Others	18252	13678	-4574	-25.06%
	East Europe	15230	13160	-2070	-13.59%
1	Russia	4213	3888	-325	-7.71%
2	Others	11017	9272	-1745	-15.84%
	Africa	3909	3509	-400	-10.23%
	Middle East	5318	4317	-1001	-18.82%
	Asia	755406	834712	79306	10.50%
1	Thailand	216323	236441	20118	9.30%
	Total	1074901	1085272	10371	0.96%

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Germany tweaks law to limit diesel car bans

FRANKFURT AM MAIN (Germang) — The German government will ease air pollution law so as to spare cities that only slightly exceed limits on harmful nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from diesel vehicle bans, ministers agreed Thursday, sparking sharp criticism by environmentalists.

Major cities like Hamburg, Frankfurt and Stuttgart have put in place or are preparing exclusion zones for older diesel vehicles in order to bring NO₂ levels under the EU-wide annual average limit of 40 microgrammes per cubic metre, with more towns on the way.

Judges have ordered some of the bans, while politicians in other urban areas moved to preempt the courts.

Underscoring the pressure on the government, a court in North Rhine-Westphalia state ruled Thursday that stretches of a major motorway in Essen must be closed to older diesels.

Such measures have outraged diesel drivers, who complain that affected vehicles are set to lose a massive chunk of their resale value as a result.

The car industry — the heart of the German economy and politically well-connected — has es-

caped at home the tens of billions in fines it has had to pay out in the United States over diesel emissions cheating.

It has also avoided any binding obligation to refit older cars to meet the latest emissions norms.

In measures still to be approved by parliament, Berlin wants to soften the threshold for implementing a ban from 40 to 50 microgrammes per cubic metre. Ministers also want to allay fears among owners in the most-polluted cities still subject to bans.

They will further alter the law to allow cars meeting the older Euro 4 and 5 standards and emitting less than 270 milligrammes of NO₂ per kilometre to enter the zones.

“The government is obviously in panic mode. Otherwise there would be no explanation for its rushing through an update to the law that infringes in several ways EU law,” said Juergen Resch, head of environmental pressure group DUH.

“We will secure the right for clean air in all cities in 2019, the courts will ignore the weakening of the thresholds,” he added. DUH plans to sue the federal government for breaking EU law if it presses ahead with the changes.—AFP ■



The German government is to ease air pollution laws aimed at curbing diesel vehicle use in urban areas. PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan goes against the grain with coal power spree

ISLAMKOT (Pakistan) — In Pakistan's bleak Thar desert, the roar of trucks is constant at a massive Chinese-backed coal power project the government sees as an answer to chronic energy shortages, but which activists warn is an environmental disaster.

Machines are running round the clock to finish the mine and coal power plant, a flagship project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) plan that has seen Beijing provide billions of dollars in financing to its southwestern neighbour.

Much of it is for infrastructure and power in a country where blackouts have infuriated citizens and hamstrung the economy for years.

And while coal is going out of vogue in most other parts of the world because of its environmental impact, it will fuel nine of the 17 proposed CPEC power plants.

The one in Thar in southern Sindh province sits atop 175 billion tonnes of coal — one of the largest deposits in the world. Discovered in 1992, it has remained unexploited until now, but is expected to yield 3.8 million tonnes a year when fully operational. A few kilometres away, towering chimneys emerge from the sand dunes as Pakistani and Chinese workers toil away on a 660-megawatt power plant which will burn coal from the mine.

After struggling for years to upgrade its power infrastructure, Pakistani leaders have touted CPEC as a “game changer” that will help lift the ailing economy, dismissing concerns that Chinese financing will lead to unsustainable debts and that the projects are boosting Beijing's interests at Islamabad's expense.

“We are five months ahead of schedule,” said Shams Shaikh, director-general of the Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC), a joint China-Pakistan venture that has invested around 1.7 billion euros (\$1.9 billion) in the Thar mine-and-plant project. Experts say the site should be able to pro-



China is backing nine new coal-fired power plants in Pakistan, but critics are concerned over environmental impacts and how the projects are financed. PHOTO: AFP

duce 200,000 MW of electricity over the next hundred years — a boon for the energy-starved country where demand increases by eight percent each year, according to official statistics.

Water warning

Despite the fanfare and government assurances, the project has triggered concern about its impact on the environment. The type of coal in Thar is lignite, notorious for its poor energy efficiency and high carbon dioxide emissions.

Project officials insist its operations will comply with national and international environmental laws.

But mining coal and burning it for power are water-intensive activities, and villagers in this impoverished, vast stretch of desert say the project is playing havoc with local supplies.

Underground rivers which previously flowed into the mine have been diverted, and residents of Gorano, a small village some 25 kilometres (15 miles) from the coal project, claim their pastures have been transformed into a salt lake due to water diversions and the dumping of waste.

“It's complete chaos,” said Raja who goes by one name, while another local, Yameen Bhatti, added: “The (diverted) water has attracted mosquitoes, which spread diseases.”

SECMC says it has given 950 million rupees (\$7 million) to the community as compensation, but after the floodwaters recede, experts warn the residents

will probably continue to struggle as the thirsty power project will consume a huge amount of ground water. Environmental concerns about Pakistan's coal spree go beyond the villages of Thar. The UN has warned that the country risks an “absolute” water shortage by 2025, and activists have warned about the impact of such industries on increasingly scarce water supplies.

Officials have said that the country's new coal plants will use the most efficient technology available to minimise pollution.

Coal vs renewable energy

Pakistan's push to build coal-fired plants comes amid a global drive to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy like solar and wind. “While the rest of the world is abandoning coal, we are throwing ourselves into this disaster,” said Omar Cheema, an environmental expert.

Some experts and officials have also suggested

it would be cheaper to invest in renewables as the price of solar and wind is dropping, and several international studies have also shown that coal is no longer competitive.

Irfan Yousuf, director of renewables at the Ministry of Energy, estimated the per-kilowatt price of solar power at 4.8 rupees, compared with 8.5 rupees for coal.

But Pakistani authorities argue that using local coal would help cut fuel imports, saving precious billions in foreign exchange, and would also provide reliable power round the clock, unlike fluctuating output from renewable sources.

Some have compared Pakistan with neighbouring India, which has announced ambitious plans to invest in renewable energy. But India is heavily dependent on coal, which provides more than 75 per cent of its electricity.

In Pakistan, it accounts for less than one per cent.—AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (186 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (186 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17-11-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T./A.I.P.T 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.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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Lost Disney film showing Mickey Mouse's predecessor found in Japan

TOKYO (Japan) — When Yasushi Watanabe bought a cartoon film decades ago as a high school student in the Japanese city of Osaka, he had no idea he was purchasing animation history.

But the modest reel he bought for just 500 yen (\$4.40 in today's money) has been revealed as a rare lost cartoon produced by Walt Disney featuring a character that led to the creation of Mickey Mouse. The discovery was reported by Japan's Asahi Shimbun daily, which Watanabe contacted after reading a book about the history of "Oswald the Lucky Rabbit", the character Disney created in the 1920s. While Disney created the character, complete with oversized

ears and a button nose, he lost the rights to another company, prompting him to develop a new cartoon figure: Mickey Mouse. The book said seven of the 26 short films featuring Oswald that Walt Disney produced were missing, and Watanabe remembered his childhood reel. It was labelled in Japanese "Mickey Manga Spide" — Mickey Cartoon Speedy in English — and featured a dog policeman on a motorbike chasing Oswald and his girlfriend in a car.

As the trio speed around valleys and along roads, the characters and the vehicles stretched and shrank, the Asahi reported, using a technique that later featured commonly in Disney works.

The newspaper contacted

the author of the book and the Walt Disney Archives and confirmed that the reel was indeed one of the missing films, originally titled "Neck 'n' Neck."

"We're absolutely delighted to learn that a copy of the lost film exists," Becky Cline, director of the archives, told the newspaper.

"As I've been a Disney fan for many years, I'm happy I was able to play a role (in the discovery," added Watanabe, an anime history researcher who is now 84.

His childhood purchase is now housed at the Kobe Planet Film Archive, and another film showing 50 seconds of the same cartoon has also been unearthed at the Toy Film Museum in Kyoto, the newspaper said.—AFP ■

Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship concludes with awards ceremony in Ngwe Saung

THE awarding ceremony of the Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship (OAOC) was held at Ngwehsaung beach, Patheingyi District, Ayeyawady Region yesterday.

First, Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Mya Lay Sein delivered the opening speech, followed by Vice Chairman of Myanmar Yachting Federation U Phone Kyaw Moe Myint and Chairman of International Optimist Dinghy Association expressing their gratitude.

Next, the Deputy Minister, Ayeyawady Region Minister for Social Affairs Dr. Hla Myat Thway, Chairman of Myanmar Yachting Federation U Moe

Myint and officials presented awards to the winners of the OAOC.

Afterwards, a dinner was hosted for the attendees and participants and the closing ceremony was held with the audience enjoying traditional dances.

The U-15 Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship (OAOC) was held from 11 to 16 November and over 130 players from 16 countries participated in the tournament.

Ten men and eight women from Myanmar took part in the Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship.—Min Thit (MNA) ■ / (Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

Uruguayan poet wins top Spanish literary award

MADRID — Uruguayan poet Ida Vitale, 95, on Thursday won the Cervantes Prize, the most prestigious literary award in the Spanish-speaking world, Spain's Culture Minister Jose Guirao announced.

Born in 1923, Vitale is the

last surviving member of a Uruguayan art movement known as the "Generation of 45" and currently lives in the United States.

Spain established the Miguel de Cervantes Prize, named after the famous author of 'Don Quixote', in 1975. It is

considered to be "the most prestigious and remunerative award given for Spanish-language literature" by the Encyclopedia Britannica.

The jury said Vitale was awarded the prize for her poetry, literary criticisms and translations, adding that her language was "one of the most remarkable and well-known in Spanish poetry, at the same time intellectual and accessible, universal and personal, transparent and profound."

She is the fifth woman to win the prize.

"I never expected to win the prize, it's absolutely bewildering," she told AFP. "It's a surprise... an excess of generosity from Spain. —AFP ■



'I never expected to win the prize, it's absolutely bewildering,' Vitale told AFP. **PHOTO: AFP**



A woman looks at David Hockney's "Portrait of an Artist (Pool with Two Figures)". **PHOTO: AFP**

Hockney sells for \$90mn, sets living artist record

NEW YORK — An iconic swimming pool picture painted by British legend David Hockney sold for \$90.3 million in New York on Thursday, setting a new auction record for a living artist, Christie's said. "Portrait of an Artist (Pool with Two Figures)" was snapped up after more than nine minutes of bidding, dominated by two rival telephone bidders. The previous record was held by Jeff Koons and his "Balloon Dog (Orange)," which sold for \$58.4 million at Christie's in 2013.

It was standing room only in the packed sales room at Christie's in New York, where a smattering of applause broke out when the sale concluded, the painting hammering for \$80 million.

The buyer's premium took the final price to \$90,312,500, the auction house announced.

Christie's had estimated the 1972 oil painting at \$80 million and

called the Hockney "one of the great masterpieces of the modern era." "We rarely can say, 'This is the one opportunity to buy the best painting from the artist,'" Ana Maria Celis, vice president of post-war and contemporary art at Christie's had said before the sale.

"This is it."

In the picture, a smartly dressed man, standing on the edge of the pool, looks pensively at another figure swimming toward him in glistening waters, with an idyllic mountain view in the background.

The first man depicts Hockney's former lover and muse, Peter Schlesinger, who was one of his students at the University of California, Los Angeles.

The picture dates back to the year that their great love affair ended, and the swimmer could be Peter's new lover. —AFP ■

Bollywood stars Padukone, Singh wed in Italy

MUMBAI — Bollywood superstars Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh have tied the knot in Italy, Indian media reported Thursday.

The celebrity couple got married in a private ceremony at Lake Como on Wednesday, according to the Press Trust of India news agency.

The pair have yet to comment or release pictures from the event which was closed to the media.

Padukone is arguably Indian cinema's biggest female star currently, and she has also broken into Hollywood, starring in "xXx: Return of Xander Cage" opposite Vin Diesel.

Padukone, 32, and Singh 33, announced in a joint statement last month that their wedding would take place on 14 and 15 November.

The couple reportedly start-

ed dating in 2013 but have kept details of their relationship largely out of the public eye.

Hindi film director Karan Johar, a friend of the couple, tweeted his congratulations. —AFP ■



Indian Bollywood actors Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh have reportedly married in Italy. **PHOTO: AFP**

South Africa coding clubs plug township youth into future

MIDRAND (South Africa) — It's Wednesday, 2:00 pm sharp in the densely-populated South African township of Ivory Park on the outskirts of Midrand — time for about 60 11-year-olds to duel at their local coding club.

Armed with basic coding blocks, inventor kits, laptops and inexhaustible imagination, the six primary school teams compete against each other. The coding club kids use electronic boards to make temporary circuits and prototypes to devise solutions for problems they've identified in their community.

"We are making an incubator machine that helps children who are born premature and those who are sick," Sifiso Ngoben, a pupil at Mikateka Primary School, outside Johannesburg, told AFP.

Rival competitors from nearby Sedi-laka primary are tackling the scourge of missing children.

"On the news we always hear about children going missing, so we are making a child tracking device that can be put into children's clothes and toys," says one of the chattering crowd.

Coding is the instruction that a robot or computer programme reads and then executes.

At the coding clubs, students learn to design the code to make it happen.

Although access to schooling has increased in South Africa since the end of apartheid, the education system often fails to make the grade.

"The fact that we still have 80 per cent of teachers using chalks and blackboards in this day and age is a serious cause for great concern," education activist Hendrick Mkaneta said.

"It cannot be correct that the class of 2018 still looks exactly like

the class of 1918."

Studies, including the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), reveal that the South African public education system is at the bottom of the class when compared with the rest of the world, especially in maths and science. Such subjects are key skill areas, and coding clubs have been rapidly able to create a niche for themselves.

From fun games to employment?

In September, the ministry of education said it would get behind coding clubs, which have also proved popular elsewhere in Africa, including Kenya and Botswana. In South Africa, the clubs are mainly hosted for free by NGOs, such as ORT SA, Code-JIKA and We Think Code.

"The will is there and our schools are open to it, some of them already have it (basic coding training) as part of their formal curriculum in technical schools," education ministry spokesman Elijah Mhlanga said.

"Pupils will be exposed to it so that as they grow up they are

truly aware of what it will require of them."

In a country where over 50 per cent of young people are unemployed, coding clubs also boost the chances of finding a job.

"The clubs are about teaching learners the basics of coding and programming. We do basic coding using blocks and as they go to high school, we introduce them to more complex programmes," Chamu Mawire, coding facilitator at ORT SA, told AFP.

But the coding has to be relevant to daily lives to get youngsters to want to learn, he said.

"We want them to identify problems in their areas or in their schools and then they make projects to try and solve those problems within their day-to-day life," he said.

While most of the Ivory Park pupils are familiar with using smart phones, smart TVs and the internet, coding and understanding algorithms is another challenge all together.

A 2018 report by McKinsey highlights that 45 per cent of all current tasks could be automated with present technology. —AFP ■



Pupils at the coding club in Ivory Park take wires from the breadboard — the base for building an electronics circuit — to a fan that they will programme to work from a laptop. PHOTO: AFP



The International Space Station has been awaiting resupply since a Soyuz rocket carrying three people failed last month. PHOTO: AFP

Poor weather delays US space cargo launch to Saturday

WASHINGTON (United States) — Windy weather pushed back until Saturday the planned launch of a US cargo ship loaded with supplies for astronauts living at the International Space Station, NASA said Thursday.

The delay to 4:01 am (0901 GMT) on 17 November from Wallops Island, Virginia marks the second time launch managers have postponed the mission from its initial flight plan of Thursday.

"The teams decided to wait another day for launch after assessing continuing unfavorable weather conditions, including high winds and high seas, forecast for Friday morning," said a statement from Northrop Grumman, which operates the Antares rocket.

"The forecast for a launch Saturday is significantly improved with a less than five per cent chance of weather conditions preventing a launch."

An unmanned Russian Progress supply ship is also scheduled to launch from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 1814 GMT on Friday.

The Russian ship is scheduled to arrive at the orbiting out-

post Sunday.

A NASA spokeswoman told AFP the Cygnus — bearing 7,400 pounds (3,350 kilograms) of supplies — will follow at 5:20 am (0920 GMT) Monday.

They mark the first cargo missions to ISS since a Soyuz rocket carrying three people bound for the space station failed on October 11 just minutes after blast-off — the first such incident in the history of post-Soviet space travel.

The astronauts on board were not hurt. Russia has since blamed the problem on a sensor that was damaged during assembly at the Baikonur cosmodrome.

And Russia has already marked a successful return to flight with its Soyuz rocket on 25 October, launching a satellite for the Russian military.

Three astronauts — one German, one Russian and one American — are currently living at the space station, which has been continually inhabited since 2000.

The next Soyuz launch with astronauts on board — one Russian, one Canadian and one American — is planned for 3 December. —AFP ■

Denmark creates global research hub for antibiotics resistance

COPENHAGEN (Denmark) — Denmark said Thursday it would create an international research centre focused on the fight against resistance to antibiotics, a scourge affecting almost half a million people worldwide.

Danish Health Minister Ellen Trane Norby signed a memorandum of understanding in Seattle, in the United States, with the international network of research centres CGIAR, to establish the

centre, her office told AFP.

Denmark aims to lead "future global work on finding new solutions for the serious challenges with antimicrobial resistance we are facing today," Norby said in a statement.

The International Centre for Interdisciplinary Solutions on AMR (Antimicrobial Resistance), financed by Denmark and private investors, will open in 2019 and is expected to employ up to

500 people.

In 2016, 490,000 people developed a resistance to antibiotics, according to figures from the World Health Organisation.

The growing problem causes 33,000 deaths in Europe each year, a recent study by the Stockholm-based European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said.

"The burden of these infections is comparable to that of

influenza, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS combined," the ECDC said.

Discovered in the 1920s, antibiotics have saved tens of millions of lives by defeating bacterial diseases such as pneumonia, tuberculosis and meningitis.

But over the decades, bacteria have learned to fight back, building resistance to the same drugs that once reliably vanquished them.

The WHO has repeatedly

warned the world is running out of effective antibiotics, and last year urged governments and big pharma companies to create a new generation of drugs to fight ultra-resistant supergerms.

Bacteria can become resistant when patients use antibiotics they do not need, or do not finish a course of treatment, giving the half-defeated bug a chance to recover and build immunity. —AFP ■

Myanmar beat Laos in AFF Suzuki Cup 2018 group match



Myanmar's striker Aung Thu (left) fights for the ball with a Laos defender at the AFF Suzuki Cup group match at New Laos National Stadium in Vientiane yesterday. **PHOTO: MFF**

MYANMAR national football team beat Laos 3-1 in the group play of AFF Suzuki Cup 2018 Group (A) at New Laos National Stadium in Vientiane yesterday.

Myanmar lined up with goal-keeper Kyaw Zin Htet, Thein Than Win, David Htan, Pyae Phyoe Zaw, Zaw Min Tun, Hlaing Bo Bo, Lwin Moe Aung, Maung Maung Lwin, Than Htet Aung, Aee Soe and Aung Thu.

Both teams played well by putting their utmost efforts and showing their dribbling skills from the start.

Laos gained a super chance at the 14 minute mark and was finely finished by Phouthone In-nalay.

That goal prodded Myanmar into action and equalized at 45

minute-mark by Myanmar star striker Aung Thu.

The first half was ended with 1-1. In the second half, Myanmar changed their tactic with using the power play.

Taking advantage of Laos' ragged defence line, Pyoe Wai Htet scored the second goal for Myanmar at 72 minute.

The match intensified in the final minutes with Myanmar dominating. Again, Myanmar star Maung Maung Lwin scored the winning third goal for Myanmar by his brilliant efforts.

The win gives Myanmar a total of six points, tops in the table. Myanmar will next play against Viet Nam at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on coming Tuesday.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Second Taolu World Cup 2018 opens in Yangon

THE opening ceremony for the 2nd Taolu World Cup 2018 was held at the Myanmar Sports Hotel in Yangon yesterday evening.

The Director-General of the Department of Sports and Physical Education, U Myo Hlaing, and Executive Vice President of the International Wushu Federation, Mr. Anthony Goh, delivered the opening speeches at the ceremony. U Myo Hlaing spoke on behalf of the Union Minister for Health

and Sports, Dr. Myint Htwe.

A total of 143 athletes and coaches from 21 nations will participate in the World Cup Championship.

There will be 11 men's events and 11 women's events, including Taijiquan, Taijijian, Jianshu, Qiangshu, Nandao, and Nangun.

Nyein Chan Ko Ko, Thein Than Oo, Sandi Oo, and Aye Thitsar Myint will represent for Myanmar at the championship.

Nyein Chan Ko Ko will compete in the Taijiquan and Taijijian events. Thein Than Oo will compete in the Nandao and Nangun events, Sandi Oo in the Jianshu and Qiangshu events, and Aye Thitsar Myint in the Nandao and Nangun events, respectively.

Myanmar will hold the 2nd Taolu World Cup in the Thuwunna National Indoors Stadium-1 on 17 and 18 November.—A Kay Lin ■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)



Myanmar Billiard player Khin Maung Oo. **PHOTO: AR KAR SOE**

World Billiards and Snooker Championship 2018 continues in Yangon

THE IBSF World Billiards and Snooker Championship 2018 (Long Up) continued at the Mercure Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

Players from Australia, England, India, Ireland, Myanmar, Singapore, Korea, Thailand, and Viet Nam competed in the long-up format yesterday.

A total of nine players are representing Myanmar in the Long Ups, including Aung San

Oo, Nay Thwe Oo, Chit Ko Ko, Pauksa, Khin Maung Oo, Aung Htay, San Myint, and Zaw Than Htike.

The final matches of the billiard championship will be held on 18 November. The snooker championship will begin on 19 November, and will include men's snooker, women's snooker, and masters snooker.—A Kay Lin ■ (Translated by KZL)



Officials open the 2nd Taolu World Cup 2018 at the Myanmar Sports Hotel in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: BALA SOE**

Lethwei Nation Fight 9 to be held in Yangon on Sunday

THE Lethwei Nation Fight 9 will be held at the Thein Phyu Indoor Stadium in Yangon on Sunday, according to the Myanmar Lethwei's social media page.

The bare-knuckle boxing competition will have 7 bouts in different weight classes. It will

feature fighters from Myanmar and Thailand.

In the 67 Kg weight class, Myanmar's Saw Soe Lin Oo will fight Sam Kung from Thailand.

In the 75 Kg weight class, Myanmar's Saw Sawar will compete against Richard Si from

Thailand. In the 61 Kg weight class, Myanmar's Saw Mu Htawgay will be pitted against Thailand's Phit Phayoun. In the 64 Kg weight class, Tout Shar (Myanmar) will fight against Kaung Pyae Kyaw (Myanmar).

In the 65 Kg weight class,

Myat Min (Naga Mhan) from Myanmar will contest Tun Lin Aung (Doe Yoe Yar) from Myanmar.

In the 57 Kg weight class, Kanaung Thwe (Myanmar) will fight against Naing Wann (Myanmar). In the 55 Kg weight

class, Kabar Shar (Myanmar) will come up against Duwun Kyel (Myanmar). Lethwei is a full-contact combat sport, which involves bare-knuckle boxing, stand-up striking, besides several clinching techniques.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■