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President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and family hand over a gold plaque for the Shwedagon Pagoda to a member of the pagoda's board of trustees. **PHOTO: MNA**

President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho donate pure gold, solid gold, gold leaf robes to the Shwedagon Pagoda

PRESIDENT of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho attended the donation ceremony to offer pure gold, solid gold and gold leaf robes to the Shwedagon Pagoda, at 10 am yesterday, at the Ancient Buddha Images Pavilion.

The ceremony was formally opened by Shwedagon Pagoda Ovadacariya Sayadaw Yangon Region Yankin Township Mahadhammikaryone Monastery Kyaikpikyaung Sayadaw Abhidhajamaraththaguru Abhidhaja Aggamahasaddhamajotika Bhantanta Gunaysana, U Min Thu, Union Minister from the Office

of the Union Government, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Union Minister for Industry U Khin Maung Cho, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region minister for social affairs, Myanmar Police Force Chief and officials.

At the ceremony, President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and congregation received the five precepts from the Ovadacariya Kyaikpi Sayadaw, followed by the recitation of parittas (holy protective verses) by members of the Sangha.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with UN Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Haoliang Xu in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor receives United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and regional director for UNDP

STATE Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Director for the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Mr. Haoliang Xu and his delegation at 10:00 am on 13 December 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on matters pertaining to the UNDP's continued assistance to Myanmar Government's endeavors

to achieve rule of law, socio-economic development, national reconciliation and peace process in Myanmar, progress on the implementation of the MoU signed between Myanmar, UNDP and UNHCR on 6 June 2018, and socio-economic development for all communities in Rakhine State.

Present also at the meeting were Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

—MNA

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw votes against Euro 70 mln AFD Loan

PYIDAUNGSSU Hluttaw voted against Euro 70 million French Development Agency (AFD) or Agence Francaise de Developpement loan during Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's tenth regular session ninth-day meeting held at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday.

In addition to this, at the meeting Joint Bill Committee 30-month work report was read and put on record, signing of MoA on the establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility and annual fee explained, annual reports explained and joint public account committee reports read, 2018 mid-term debt management strategy explained, six-month work report of Union Legal Support Group read and Hluttaw representatives discussed EDCF loan from EXIM Bank of Korea.

Joint Bill Committee 30-month work report

As a first agenda of the day a Joint Bill Committee 30-month work report was read by committee secretary U Kyaw Soe Lin. The report mentioned that during the 30 months period of Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw the committee had supported the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw towards approving a total of 71 bills and will continue to protect the dignity of the Hluttaw while conducting its legislative duties.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced the Hluttaw putting the report on record.

MoA on establishing BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility and payment of annual fee

Next, Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun explained about signing Memorandum of Association (MoA) on the establishment of BIMSTEC



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Technology Transfer Facility and payment of an annual fee of US\$ 13,356.

The Deputy Minister explained that by signing the MoA, appropriate technologies on MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) can be effectively exchanged; agriculture, pharmaceutical and health technologies; technologies on mitigation against natural disasters and working in accordance to climate change; ICT (information and communication technology) and 14 priority sectors including renewable energy technology can be smoothly and easily transferred between BIMSTEC member countries. As such Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is requested to approve the signing of the MoA on the establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility and paying the annual fee.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker then announced for Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the matter to register their names.

National Plan and Union Budget Annual Reports

explained and Joint Public Account Committee reports read

Afterwards Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Set Aung explained to the Hluttaw the fiscal year 2017-2018 National Plan Annual Report and fiscal Year 2017-2018 Union Budget Annual Report sent by the Union Government.

Explaining the Union Budget Annual Report the Deputy Minister said that in implementing fiscal year 2017-2018 budget union level organisations were unable to achieve targeted capital incomes and loans. Only when foreign assistance and loans that can be acquired in a year is included in the budget can the gap closed between targeted and implemented said the Deputy Minister.

Similarly in the expenditure portion of union level organisations, some were unable to fully utilize the expenditures from foreign loans and assistances.

In the forthcoming budgets, Union departments, and organisations conducting outside of

union budget plan are to draw up their budgets as close as possible to the actual amount. Utilization of general advance funds and transfer of reserve funds are required to be reported and to be conducted in accordance to the financial rules and regulation said the Deputy Minister. After explaining the reports, the Deputy Minister requested the Hluttaw to put the reports on the record.

After each explanation of the reports were made by the Deputy Minister, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Public Accounts Committee members Daw Shwe Shwe Sein Latt and Daw Cho Cho Win read the committee's findings and comments reports 13/2018 and 14/2018 and tabled motions for the Hluttaw to consider the reports.

After each reports and motions were read and tabled, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced for Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the reports to register their names.

2018 mid-term debt management strategy

Following this Deputy Min-

ister for Planning and Finance U Set Aung explained about 2018 mid-term debt management strategy and requested the Hluttaw to approve it.

Submission of Union Legal Support Group six-month work report

Later Union Legal Support Group secretary U Khin Zaw submitted to the Hluttaw the group's six-month work report. Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker then announced for Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the report to register their names.

Hluttaw votes against Euro 70 million AFD loan

This was then followed by Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Set Aung responding to the Joint Public Accounts Committee report on Euro 70 million AFD loan but when the matter was voted upon by the Hluttaw, there were 34 for, 497 against with 6 abstaining and the Hluttaw announced that it is not agreeing to the loan.

Hluttaw discusses EDCF loan from EXIM Bank of Korea

Finally U Khin Cho of Hlaing-bwe constituency, Daw Aye Mya Mya Moe of Kyauktan constituency, U Nay Kyaw of Dagon Myothit (East) constituency and Dr. Win Aung of KhinU constituency discusses US\$ 93.779 million Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) loan from EXIM Bank of Korea.

The tenth-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's tenth regular session will be held on 18 December it is learnt.—Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant (MNA) ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee discusses Tax Management Bill

MEMBERS of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee held a meeting discussing the Tax Management Bill at the meeting hall of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building.

The meeting was attended by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Bill Committee and Joint Public Accounts Committee Chairman U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, dep-

uty chairman, secretary, joint secretary and committee members from Joint Bill Committee, Hluttaw representatives who had tabled amendment motions for the bill, and officials from the Ministry of Planning and Finance, Union Attorney General Office and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.—MNA ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)



President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho donate pure gold, solid gold, gold leaf robes to Shwedagon Pagoda

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Then the ceremony continued with President, First Lady and family donating the gold leaf robes after which the Shwedagon Pagoda alternate Board of Trustee member U Aung Myint accepted it and gave out certificates of honour.

Next, President and First Lady donated offertories to vadacariya Kyaikepi Monastery Sayadaw. Following this, Union Ministers and officials donated offertories to the Ovadacariya Sayadaws and sanghas.

Next, Nyaungtone Pali University Padana Nayaka Aggamanaganthavacakapandita Bhandata Pawayabhivansa delivered a sermon to the congregation, after

which the President, First Lady and congregation shared merits gained from the donation.

Then the President and First Lady sprinkled scented water on gold leaf robes and carried the offerings atop the pagoda by using a flying mingalar chariot.

They then attended the inauguration of the gold-leaf mill being constructed in the southern Pyitsaya of the pagoda.

Union Ministers U Min Thu, Thura U Aung Ko and U Khin Maung Cho, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyto Min Thein and gold-leaf mill donor Sudhammamanijotadhara U Zaw Win inaugurated the ceremony by cutting the ceremonial ribbons. Following this, President, First



President U Win Myint visits the gold-moulding mill as workers make gold plates at the Shwedagon Pagoda. **PHOTO: MNA**

Lady and officials sprinkled the stone inscription containing a record of the donation with scented water and inspected the gold-

leaf mill. Afterwards President U Win Myint, First Lady, Union Ministers, Yangon Region Chief Minister and officials posed for

documentary photographs with the invited guests. —MNA

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

10th GMS Economic Corridors Forum held in Nay Pyi Taw



Union Minister U Thaung Tun addresses the 10th Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Corridors Forum in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

10th Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Corridors Forum was held in M Gallery Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his opening remark to the opening ceremony of the forum

Union Minister U Thaung Tun spoke of the importance of the economic corridors and relation to Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP).

At the meeting assessment

and review on development status of GMS economic corridors, sector wise preliminary assessment and review on north-south economic corridor; GMS e-commerce process, cooperation in health, safe and secure movement of migrant workers were discussed.

The forum was attended by Union Ministers U Thant Sin Maung, U Thein Swe and U Han Zaw, representatives from GMS member countries of Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam and Asia Development Bank (ADB), representatives from development partner organisations and private sector totaling more than 150 it is learnt. —MNA ■

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Dr. Albrecht Schnabel from MYPOL



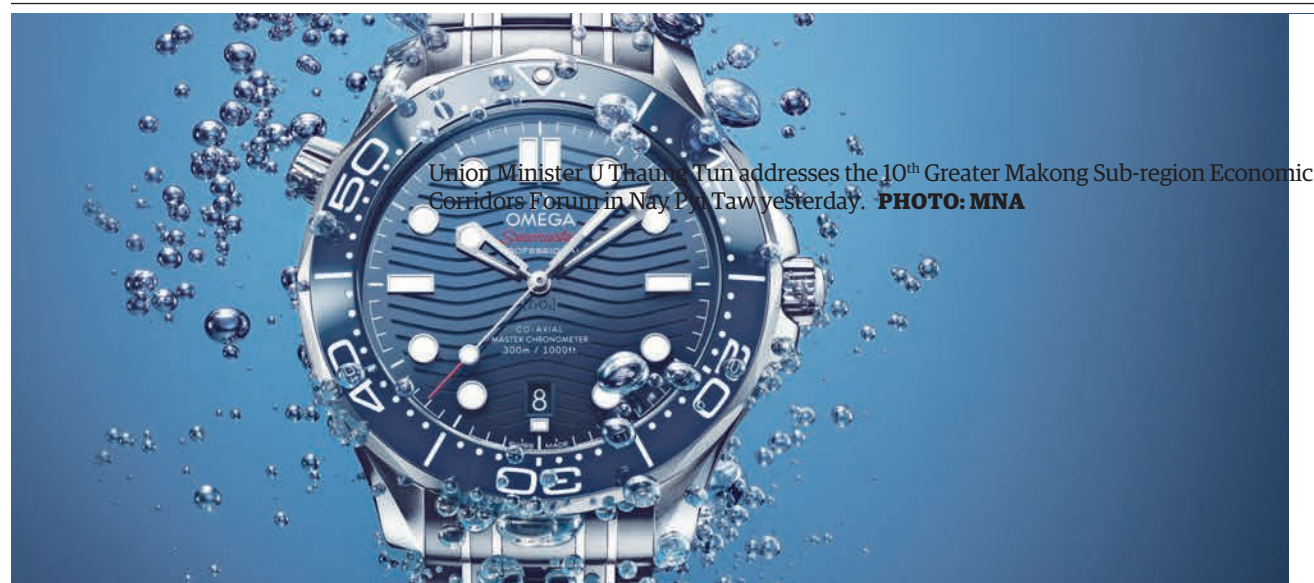
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Commission Chair Thura U Shwe Mann meets with Dr. Albrecht Schnabel, Head of Asia Pacific Union from MYPOL. **PHOTO: MNA**

CHAIRMAN of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann received Dr. Albrecht Schnabel, a Senior Expert and Head of Asia Pacific Unit from MYPOL, at I-11 Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yes-

terday.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views and discussed matters related to the cooperation of MYPOL in democratic reform. —MNA ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)



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State Counsellor receives Foreign Minister of Commonwealth of Australia

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received the Honourable Marise Payne, Foreign Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia on 13th December 2018 at 24:30 pm at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on the matters pertaining to the continued provision of Australian Assistance to Myanmar in education sector, peace process, reform of govern-

ment institutions, repatriation of displaced persons from Rakhine State and provision of humanitarian assistance, educational support programs in Rakhine State conducted with Australian assistance, the progress of the implementation of the recommendations of Kofi Annan Commission and Myanmar democratization process. U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation hosted a luncheon to the delegation led by Australian Foreign Minister at M-Gallery Hotel, Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, right, meets with Honourable Marise Payne, Foreign Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives Senior Vice President of US-ASEAN Business Council

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received Senior Vice President of US-ASEAN Business Council Mr. Michael W. Michalak at Zabuthiri Hall, Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw at 2 pm yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views and discussed matters related to US-Myanmar bilateral investment and business cooperation, development of banking and finance industry, cooperation in

health care and Hluttaw legislative issues.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein, Chairpersons of Pyithu Hluttaw Affairs Committee U Khin Maung Win, U Aung Min, Dr. May Win Myint, U Zaw Thein, Daw Khin San Hlaing, U Khin Aye, U Tin Maung Win and U Win Thein Zaw and officials from Pyithu Hluttaw Office were present.—MNA ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat meets with Senior Vice President of US-ASEAN Business Council Mr. Michael W. Michalak in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker receives high-level officials from Canada NDI



cratic Institute (NDI) of Canada at Amyotha Hluttaw Building, No I-20 meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, the Deputy Speaker delivered a

welcome speech and exchanged views on matters related to the Hluttaw and delivered the closing speech at the end.—MNA ■
(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Union Minister U Thaung Tun receives Australian Foreign Minister

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun received Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Senator Marise Payne and delegation on Thursday, 13 December 2018 at 3:30 pm at the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations. Matters related

political and economic development and bilateral matters were discussed. The meeting was attended by officials from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the Australian Embassy in Yangon Mr. Jeremy Kruse.—MNA ■



PHOTO: MNA

Vice President U Myint Swe, Indian President inaugurate 5th Enterprise India Show in Yangon

VICE President U Myint Swe and President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 5th Enterprise India Show at the Lotte Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

The Show will be held from 13 to 15 December and is jointly organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry with support from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry together with Myanmar-based India-Myanmar Confederation of Commerce/Industry and the Indian Embassy in Myanmar.

Attending the opening ceremony were Union Ministers Dr. Aung Thu, Dr. Than Myint, Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, and U Soe Win, Yangon Region cabinet members, Myanmar Ambassador to India U Moe Kyaw Aung, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Vikram Misri, officials from the Confederation of Indian Industry, the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar-based India-Myanmar Confederation of Commerce/Industry, and the Indian Embassy in Myanmar, and invited guests.

First, Ambassador Mr. Vikram Misri delivered the opening speech, followed by Vice President U Myint Swe.

In his address, the Vice President said there was no doubt that this event would



Vice President U Myint Swe and Indian President Shri Ram Nath Kovind cut ceremonial ribbons to formally open the 5th Enterprise India Show in Lotte Hotel, Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

provide immense opportunities for the business community to do business in Myanmar. He expressed his hope that the participation of investors and business people from both India and Myanmar would facilitate a deeper understanding, leading to enhancement of business networking. It would further accelerate the trade relations, promote more investments and create business-to-business engagement between Myanmar and India, he said.

He said both Myanmar and India share many affinities in culture, religion and tradition

and added that based on these values, we have established strong people to people ties and enjoyed a longstanding and enduring friendship.

He continued, "Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries in 1948, our cooperation has made significant achievements. We have been cooperating in the areas of trade and investment, transport and communications, energy, technology, tourism, agriculture, fisheries as well as in the context of regional cooperation such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral

Technical and Economic Cooperation-(BIMSTEC) and South Asia Sub-Regional Economic Cooperation, among others."

"As of September 2018, bilateral trade relations between Myanmar and India accounted for US\$800.431 million. The main export commodities from Myanmar are pulses, plywood and veneer, timber, base metal and fish while the import items from India are pharmaceutical products, iron and steel construction materials, transport equipment, mineral fuel and oil and machinery and mechanical appliances."

"Sharing a long land border

of over 1600 km, border trade between our two countries has reached US\$93.452 million as of September 2018. Agro-based products such as beans and pulses and betel nuts are the main export commodities of Myanmar in border trade with India."

"India stands at the 11th position among 49 countries, investing in Myanmar. A total of 30 investment projects with the total pledge amounting to US\$763.567 million are permitted as of September 2018. A total of 225 Indian companies have been registered and doing business in Myanmar by the end of June 2018."

The Vice President continued, "I appreciate the enthusiastic participation of the Indian companies through showcasing their products and services and exploring business opportunities. I understand that this 5th Enterprise India Show focuses on nine sectors namely agriculture and farm equipment, automobiles, auto components and transportation, HVAC/ construction equipment, machinery and building materials, skill development, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals, oil and gas, education, energy, electricity and water, service enterprises. It is also encouraging that more than 70 exhibitors and over 30 business delegations are taking part in this event."

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President of India, First Lady visit Dhamma Joti Vipassana Centre, Secretariat

PRESIDENT of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind, First Lady Smt. Savita Kovind and party who were on a goodwill visit to Myanmar visited Kali Bari Temple in Pabedan Township, Yangon yesterday morning at 9:40 a.m.

The President of India, First Lady and party offered prayers with flowers, water and oil lamps and then inspected the temple compound.

Next, the President of India, First Lady and party pay homage to the Tomb of Bahadur Shah Zafar on Zewaka Road, Dagon Township.

Afterwards, the President of India attended the 5th Enterprise India Show held at Lotte Hotel, Pyay Road.

Later at 4 p.m. the Presi-

dent of India, First Lady and party visited the Secretariat or Secretariat Building on Theinbyu Road.

From there the President of India, First Lady and party went to International Dhamma Giri Vipassana Academy Dhamma Joti Vipassana Meditation Centre in Bahan Township.

There President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind opened Dhamma Yeiktha 2 Building by pressing a button and then conducted Vipassana meditation. Officials of International Dhamma Giri Vipassana Academy Dhamma Joti Vipassana Meditation Centre presented a portrait as a gift. — MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)



President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind and First Lady Smt. Savita Kovind visit the Secretariat or Secretariat Building on Theinbyu Road in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar-India Joint Statement issued on the occasion of the State Visit of His Excellency Shri Ram Nath Kovind, President of the Republic of India, to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (10-14 December 2018)

1. At the invitation of the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, His Excellency U Win Myint and the First Lady Daw Cho Cho, the President of the Republic of India, His Excellency Shri Ram Nath Kovind and the First Lady Smt. Savita Kovind paid a State Visit to Myanmar from 10 to 14 December 2018. The visit reinforces the tradition of high-level interaction between the leaders of the two countries in recent years.

2. A ceremonial welcome was accorded to President Kovind at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 December, 2018. President U Win Myint and President Kovind held a bilateral meeting and President U Win Myint hosted a State Banquet for the visiting President in his honour. President Kovind also met with State Counsellor, Her Excellency Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The discussions between the leaders were held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere that is the hallmark of the close and friendly relations between the two countries. President U Win Myint and President Kovind also witnessed the signing of MoUs between the two sides in the areas of judicial and educational cooperation. The Indian side also handed over the first 50 units of prefabricated houses built in Rakhine State under the Rakhine State Development Programme funded by the Government of India. Furthermore, both sides agreed to sign at the earliest the MoU for Cooperation on Combating Timber Trafficking and Conservation of Tigers and Other Wildlife and the MoU on Bilateral Cooperation for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons; Rescue, Recovery, Repatriation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking, on which negotiations are nearing completion.

3. On 12 December 2018, President Kovind visited the Advanced Centre for Agricultural Research and Education and the Rice Bio Park that have been set up with the assistance of Indian Government in the precincts of Yezin Agricultural University. Both the facilities were formally dedicated by President Kovind to the people of Myanmar. They



President U Win Myint receives President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

demonstrate continuing commitment of India to assist Myanmar in capacity building and providing technical assistance in the all-important agriculture sector.

4. President Kovind also travelled to Yangon where he visited places of historical and cultural importance, and paid his respects at the Martyrs' Mausoleum. He met with the Indian-origin and expatriate Indian community of Myanmar and also inaugurated the Enterprise India Show, which witnessed the participation of Indian industries to network, partner and explore business opportunities in Myanmar.

5. During the talks, the leaders of the two countries reaffirmed their common aspiration for peace, collective prosperity and development of the region and beyond. They reviewed developments since the visits of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Myanmar in September 2017 and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to India in January 2018 and noted the growing exchanges in the bilateral sphere, including in the areas of trade, investment, culture, people-to-people contacts and security that bear testimony to the synergies between Myanmar's independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy and India's pragmatic Act East and Neighbourhood First policies. The leaders agreed to continue exploring new opportunities to expand bilateral relations for the mutual benefit of the peoples of

both countries.

6. The Government of India appreciated the Government of Myanmar's announcement to grant Tourist Visa on Arrival, starting from 1 December 2018, to Indian citizens who intend to visit Myanmar. This will promote people to people ties and increase the flow of tourists between the two countries. The Government of Myanmar also thanked the Government of India for accord-ing gratis visa for all Myanmar citizens visiting India.

7. President Kovind appreciated Myanmar Government's ongoing efforts toward achieving peace and national reconciliation in the country. He expressed full support of the Government of India to the on-going peace process being pursued with various ethnic armed organizations. He underlined that peace and stability in Myanmar are equally in India's own interest, and that India stands committed to help Myanmar strengthen democratic institutions and emerge as a democratic federal union. In this regard, Myanmar expressed its appreciation to India for the exposure visits being arranged by India for parliamentarians and parliamentary personnel from Myanmar.

8. The leaders agreed that terrorism constitutes a significant threat to peace and stability in the region and should be confronted in all its forms and manifestations. They called on the international community to end selective and partial ap-



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

proaches to combating terrorism and, in this regard, jointly called for the expeditious finalization and adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism by the United Nations General Assembly.

9. The leaders also noted the need to maintain security and stability along the India-Myanmar borders, which is essential for the socio-economic development of the populations living in the border areas. In this regard, both sides underlined their mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and reaffirmed their shared commitment to fight insurgent activity and the scourge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Both sides reiterated that their commitment to not allow insurgent groups to use their soil for hostile activities against the other side is essential for the stability of the border regions and the prosperity of the people residing along the border.

10. Both sides reiterated their mutual respect for the already demarcated boundary between the two countries and emphasized the need to resolve amicably outstanding boundary demarcation issues at the earliest, through existing bilateral mechanisms.

11. Myanmar appreciated the initiatives taken by the Government of India for organizing the global celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Both sides recalled the close association between Ma-

hatma Gandhi and the people and leadership of Myanmar.

12. Both sides also exchanged views on the regional and international situation including the need for enhancing closer bilateral cooperation in various spheres in the broader Indo-Pacific region, with an emphasis on maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, transnational crimes and mutually-beneficial development cooperation. They also agreed to work together to deepen cooperation between security agencies of the two countries through institutionalized bilateral mechanisms, including coordinated patrolling initiatives along their land and maritime boundaries. They also agreed to promote cooperation within BIM-STEC, which offers considerable opportunities for partnership in energy, trade and connectivity.

13. India reiterated its commitment to support Myanmar in its efforts to build infrastructure and develop its human resources. Myanmar expressed its appreciation for India's assistance in its endeavour for socio-economic development. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the ongoing capacity building programmes for Myanmar judicial officers, military personnel and police. Both sides reviewed the progress made on projects being executed with technical and financial assistance from the Government of India. With regard to the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project, both

sides welcomed the signature of the MoU on appointing a port operator, which would enable the Sittwe Port and Paletwa IWT infrastructure to be used commercially for the development of the surrounding areas. They agreed to expedite the process for the appointment of an operator for this purpose. Both sides also noted with satisfaction that work on the final stage of the project — the road from Paletwa to Zorinpui on the Indian border — was underway and agreed to facilitate movement of project personnel, construction material and equipment across the border through Zorinpui and from Paletwa.

14. The two sides also welcomed the progress of work being executed by Indian agencies on different segments of the Trilateral Highway in Myanmar. Myanmar agreed to convey expeditiously information needed for starting work on the Rih-Tedim road. Both sides noted that the survey has already been conducted for the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for the Rihkhawdar-Zowkhawdar bridge and the Bwaynu bridge in Chin State. It was also agreed to cooperate to utilize the various concessional finance instruments extended by India to Myanmar.

15. The two sides welcomed the entry into force of the landmark agreement of May 2018 on land border crossing, which has had a positive impact in promoting smooth movement of people between the two countries. In order to complement this agreement and derive full value from the various infrastructure connectivity projects under execution, both sides agreed to launch negotiations for concluding expeditiously a bilateral motor vehicles agreement that would enable passenger and cargo traffic to cross the border. India undertook to send a delegation to Myanmar at an early date for this purpose. Both sides expressed their willingness to operate a coordinated bus service between Mandalay and Imphal (Transit at Tamu/Moreh Border) in order to enhance and facilitate the contact of the people between Myanmar and India across the border. It was agreed that negotiations on Operation of Coordinated Passenger Bus Service between the two countries would further be undertaken by relevant authorities of both sides.

16. The Indian side also informed the Myanmar side that a DPR has been prepared by the Airports Authority of India for the redevelopment of Kalay Airport. This would soon be forwarded



President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attend a state dinner with President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind and first lady in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 December. **PHOTO: MNA**

to the Government of Myanmar for its comments, after which financing arrangements could be decided.

17. The two sides shared the view that the situation in Rakhine State has humanitarian, developmental as well as security dimensions. India expressed its support for the agreements reached between Myanmar and Bangladesh for the repatriation

and investment and agreed that, while robust, it had immense potential for growth in a variety of sectors. In this regard, they emphasized the need to improve market access and further facilitate trade between the two countries under the relevant bilateral and regional trading arrangements. The two sides agreed to convene at an early date the next meeting of Myanmar-India

Myanmar. Both sides noted that Myanmar-India Joint Steering Committee is coordinating to promote Cross Border Electric Power Trade. It was agreed that there was considerable potential in advancing cooperation in the renewable energy sector with Myanmar joining the International Solar Alliance recently. The Indian side agreed to send a composite delegation to Myan-

that they had similar positions on several issues of common interest. They reiterated the importance of reform within the structures of the United Nations, including early reform of the Security Council, and reaffirmed their commitment to support Inter-Governmental Negotiations for comprehensive reforms of the Security Council. Myanmar reiterated its support for India's efforts to become a permanent member of an expanded and reformed UN Security Council. The two sides also reaffirmed their commitment to work together to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They also stressed the importance of objectivity and impartiality of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in pursuing their work in the areas of human rights, security and development.

22. Both sides reiterated their determination to intensify their relationship in all spheres and continue on the existing path of good neighbourliness. With this in view, the Indian side informed that, as a preparatory step to relocation of its Embassy to the capital, India intended to set up an Interim Liaison Office in Nay Pyi Taw as soon as discussions on the formalities of opening the office and leasing property were completed with the Myanmar authorities.

23. President Kovind and First Lady Smt. Savita Kovind thanked President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho for the warm and gracious hospitality extended to them and the Indian delegation during their stay in Myanmar. President Kovind also extended an invitation to President U Win Myint to visit India at a mutually convenient time, which was accepted by the host. The dates for the visit will be discussed through diplomatic channels.

Nay Pyi Taw
14 December 2018

The Government of India appreciated the Government of Myanmar's announcement to grant Tourist Visa on Arrival, starting from 1 December 2018, to Indian citizens who intend to visit Myanmar. This will promote people to people ties and increase the flow of tourists between the two countries. The Government of Myanmar also thanked the Government of India for according gratis visa for all Myanmar citizens visiting India.

of the verified displaced persons from Rakhine State and underlined its readiness to continue to assist in addressing this complex issue. Myanmar welcomed the assistance being provided by India for infrastructure development under the aegis of the Rakhine State Development Programme. The two sides noted the progress made in executing a pilot housing project in northern Rakhine and the assistance extended by India for agricultural development and IT education in the State. The Indian side expressed its willingness to consider expanding the existing Rakhine State Development Programme, once the current allocation of US\$25 million is fully committed.

18. The two sides noted the current level of bilateral trade

Joint Trade Committee. It was also decided that the identified Border Markets/Haats would be operationalized at the earliest.

19. Both sides agreed that there was mutual benefit in promoting greater integration of power and energy supply networks between Myanmar and India, and reviewed ongoing public and private sector initiatives in this regard. Myanmar welcomed India's participation in its energy sector and India expressed its interest in participating in future opportunities for exploration and production in the hydrocarbon sector. India also expressed its readiness to extend technical as well as project-specific assistance to conventional as well as renewable energy-based power development projects identified by the Government of

mar to discuss potential areas of cooperation in new and renewable energy soon.

20. The Myanmar side expressed appreciation to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) for completing projects to preserve and restore stone inscriptions and temples of King Mindon and King Bagyidaw of Myanmar in Bodh Gaya. Both sides welcomed this development as an important symbol of the shared heritage of the two civilizations. The two leaders also welcomed the plans for ASI to start work in the near future to restore and conserve up to 92 pagodas in the historic city of Bagan.

21. The two sides reaffirmed their commitments to work closely in the UN and other multilateral organizations, noting

Treating leprosy patients with dignity

ALTHOUGH leprosy is completely curable, there is still a social stigma attached to it in Myanmar. The time has come to change our attitude towards leprosy patients and their families to end the discrimination in society against those afflicted by the disease.

Social stigma and discrimination has hindered early testing and treatment of leprosy, leading to the spread of this disease among families and through social contact. Fear of the social and economic consequences of this disease has likewise inhibited early detection among children, resulting in disability and life-long complications.

To reverse the present situation, we need to make concerted efforts to educate people that leprosy is non-communicable so that they adopt the right attitude towards leprosy patients.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has called for making efforts to eradicate discrimination against leprosy patients and their families a top priority in combating the disease in Myanmar.

To reverse the present situation, we need to make concerted efforts to educate people that leprosy is non-communicable so that they adopt the right attitude towards leprosy patients.

Health authorities should reach out to and include leprosy-affected persons and communities in all aspects of their programs. Not only will this make policy more responsive, it will also advance the interests and visibility of leprosy-affected persons in the public domain.

As part of this, persons suffering from the disease should be empowered to carry out advocacy activities as well as to participate

in early identification and treatment campaigns.

Inadequate access to healthcare services is also a key deterrent to treatment. It is no coincidence that communities in hard-to-reach areas are the most affected, and that the burden of this disease is often highly concentrated. Migrant populations, displaced communities, and the very poor are particularly vulnerable due to their exclusion from health services generally, and gaps in targeted campaigns more specifically. Continued neglect will ensure that endemic areas remain so, and that affected communities continue to bear the unnecessary burden of this disease.

Non-governmental and civil society organizations should be included in society-wide campaigns to challenge leprosy-related stigma, and to ensure, as per UN resolutions, that discrimination against affected persons and their family members is eliminated.

In our ongoing efforts to achieve zero leprosy transmission and zero leprosy-related disabilities, inclusiveness is the remedy most urgently needed.

There is no dispute that leprosy is totally curable in the 21st century and that we all have a duty to see that the disease is eradicated.

Let us join hands to also put an end to discrimination.



Modernizing permitting to drive development of Myanmar's mining sector

By Sebastian Sahla

Plans to overhaul how mineral and gemstone rights are issued are an opportunity to promote good governance and boost investment. But political will is needed to ensure success.



Farmer looking at Tiggyit open pit coal mine. PHOTO: SUTHEP KRITSANAVARIN FOR NRGI

IN September 2018, officials from Myanmar's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) participated in a study trip to Zambia. They went seeking to learn lessons about how other countries manage their mining sectors and to gather insights into ongoing reforms of Myanmar's approach to extractive permits.

Permitting in Myanmar is notoriously complex. Several MONREC departments and enterprises have the power to grant permits. Despite recent reform efforts, there is very little clarity on who exactly is involved in reviewing applications and what procedures are to be followed. Permit information is stored across multiple departments, often in hard copy only.

This makes permitting extremely slow, opaque and unpredictable. The lack of clear procedures is a burden on government officials, disincentivizes investment by responsible companies and increases the risk of corruption and mismanagement.

To help address these challenges, MONREC is preparing to develop a national register of mineral and gemstone permits known as a "cadastre." The cadastre is a requirement of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), a global initiative to promote good governance in the oil, gas and mining sectors, in which Myanmar is a candidate country.

The intention is to establish a system to administer and monitor all mineral and gemstone rights. Companies will submit permit applications through the cadastre. Cadastre officials will then record their applications in a digital system and consider them in a streamlined and legally defined process before granting (or denying) exploration or production rights.

To support implementation of this project, the Myanmar EITI and the Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI) supported the visit of officials from the Department of Mines, Department of Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration, Myanmar

Gems Enterprise and Myanmar Pearl Enterprise to the Zambia Cadastre Office in Lusaka, the capital city. There the visitors from Myanmar were able to see how a cadastre functions in practice.

The experience of Zambia shows that a well-functioning cadastre helps to promote sustainable growth of the mining sector by making permitting faster and more predictable. Zambian officials reported that it can take them as little as two months to issue certain kinds of mining permits. In Myanmar, the equivalent process can take more than a year. A well-functioning cadastre could incentivize investment and generate additional revenues for the government.

The cadastre will also help to reduce administrative burdens. At the click of a button, officials will be able to see the status of all mining permits in the country. This will make it easier to monitor revenue payments and crack down on companies operating with invalid permits. The system will also automatically check for overlaps between new applications and any active or pending permits, which will reduce

the need for officials to conduct manual checks and thereby reduce the scope for human error.

Importantly, the cadastre is an efficient tool for good governance. By requiring all investors to follow the same procedures, the scope for discretion and corruption is reduced. In Zambia, key pieces of information – like company names, approval and expiry dates and permit status – are also made available on an online public portal. This empowers accountability actors like parliamentarians, civil society organizations and journalists to better monitor the mining sector.

So what needs to happen next to ensure the success of Myanmar's cadastre? Currently work is underway to clean up existing permit data across MONREC's departments and enterprises. The next step is for MONREC to actually establish the cadaster in order to store this data and handle future permitting processes. MONREC officials should use this opportunity to revise and streamline permitting procedures with a view to increasing efficiency, predictability and transparency. This

should include clearly defining which institutions are involved at each stage of the permitting process, and establishing objective criteria and timelines for decision-making.

MONREC should roll out the cadastre to the states and regions as soon as possible. Under the new mines rules, permitting responsibilities for artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) are being decentralized, while medium and large-scale permits remain the responsibility of MONREC. Similar changes are underway in the gemstones sector. Decentralizing ASM governance is consistent with international trends. In countries ranging from Mongolia to Madagascar, subnational authorities are issuing ASM permits. Decentralization also reflects the broad-based desire within Myanmar to empower subnational institutions and to ensure that those stakeholders directly impacted by mining have a greater say in how the sector is managed.

Decentralization does come with risks, however.

At whatever level decisions are made, it is important that permitting authorities share information within a unified system. Otherwise the Union ministry and states/regions might issue overlapping permits. There is also the risk that every state and region will use different procedures and criteria for evaluating and granting permits. This could make it challenging to maintain minimum social, environmental and governance standards. The cadastre could help to mitigate these risks.

Myanmar's cadastre represents a unique opportunity to improve governance and attract investment. Its success now rests on the political will to implement it.

Sebastian Sahla is an associate at the Natural Resource Governance Institute in Yangon.

The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Global New Light of Myanmar.—Ed

U Kyaw Moe Tun Presents Credentials to President of Swiss Confederation

U Kyaw Moe Tun, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Swiss Confederation, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Mr. Alain Berset, President of the Swiss Confederation, on 11 December 2018 in Bern.—MNA

Appointment of Ambassador agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Ms. Akua Sekyiwah Ahenkora as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Ghana to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Ms. Akua Sekyiwah Ahenkora received a Bachelor Degree in Geography and Resource Development with Economics in 1989, a Master Degree in Business Administration in 2001 and a Master degree in International Affairs in 2012 from University of Ghana, Legon. After serving in the Ministry of Defence from May 1991 to January 2002, she joined the Foreign Service in February 2002 and has served in various capacities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration and Ghana High Commissions in Malaysia and Kenya. Since February 2018, she has been serving as High Commissioner of Ghana to Malaysia.—MNA

Depression Condition

13 December 2018, 19:00 MST Today

Depression

According to the observations at (18:30)hrs MST today, the depression over Southeast Bay of Bengal has moved Northwestwards and it is centred at about (615) miles Southeast of Chennai (India), about (705) miles Southeast of Machilipatnam and about (445) miles South-Southeast of Trincomalee (Sri Lanka). It is not moving towards Myanmar coasts, the present stage of the depression is coded yellow stage.

Position of depression, centre pressure and wind

Depression is located at Latitude (6.8) degree North and Longitude (88.5) degree East, centre pressure of depression is (1006) hPa and maximum wind speed near the center is (30) miles per hour.

During next (12) hrs forecast

It is forecast to move Northwestwards and it may further intensify into a deep depression during next (12) hours.

Growers of rubber plantations survive thanks to a ray of hope

By Min Maung Maung

The motto "Let us grow rubber trees for the future of a family" was spread out in our country, especially Mon and Karen States and Taninthayee and Bago Regions. At present days, rubber plantations are seen on verdant hills along the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw Highway. Rubber plantations raised the spirit of encouragement for the so-called "growers' golden age" and there was a saying of "Grow rubber trees to get rich".

A couple of decades ago, the owners of rubber plantations earned public recognition and a lot of money by creating a lot of job opportunities. Local populace enjoyed working in the rubber plantations instead of working in other countries illegally. Trading of rubber in local markets increased in number day by day. Depending on their financial availability, some locals formed a self-help group for planting rubber trees and other rich people ploughed hundreds of acres for rubber plantations.

By nurturing rubber plantations for long-term industrial raw materials, the local growers dreamed of a golden age. But nowadays, the owners of rubber plantations in Mon and Karen States and Taninthayee are heard of grumbling about their missed opportunities. As the prices of local rubber are dwindling, the workers are leaving the

plantations without collecting rubber latex; they went to neighboring

Thailand to find a job somewhere else in order to support their families financially. So it is hard to find manual workers for collecting latex; trees are cut down to be sent to a factory as a timber and some trees are cut down to use as firewood.

When root causes and consequences are studied, it is found that the standards of rubber are below export quality, short of technology and at the same time loans are not available for rubber growers. Scarcity of workers, a reduction in demands and lower prices for its inferior quality are challenges for rubber industry.

There are 500,000 acres of rubber plantations in Mon State; the current price of RSSI rubber is between K. 920 and 950 for one pound.

The price of rubber was K.840 per pound in July and prices rose in August, but growers sold it to small brokerage houses instead of sending to the townships. A grower from Barum village, Mudon Township said that as the production was not up to the standard, the proceeds from selling rubber were less than from other sources. He continued to say it was difficult for long-term production. At the present time, collection and fumigation of rubber and process of flat rubber by individuals, leading to different quality. It is heard that either a government, private



businessmen or some companies should be allowed to manage a lack of technology and uniformity in standardized rubber.

The lack of support and technology for rubber growers in Mon State fell into decline in the market. To escape the worst situation, arrangements are being made for the construction of factories in 10 townships in Mon State with the help of the State government. Now

there is a glimmer of hope for rubber growers.

Exports of rubber in the Financial Year of 2014-2015 were over 70,000 tonnes; over 80,000 tonnes in the FY of 2015-2016; over 140,000 tons during 2016-2017 and about 154,000 tons in the FY of 2017-2018, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce. The Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association (MRPPA) said we are in competition with other rubber-exporting countries in terms of quality, logistic and technology so as to raise the level of export quality. At the present time, priority should be given to the quality of rubber rather than the yield per acre in Mon State.

"Myanma Rubber Forum" was held in Nay Pyi Taw on March 21, 2018 with the aims of sustainable development of Myanmar rubber and for improvement of growers' livelihood. It is hoped that promoting the exports of rubber will not only help raise the subsistence level of rubber growers but also would create a lot of job opportunities. To realize the hopes of rubber growers, all supports are required from the government and private companies concerned.

This Article was appeared in No. 15, Vloume (18) of the "Do Kyay-Ywar" Journal on 15 September 2018.

Translated by Arakan Sein

Vice President U Myint Swe, President of India inaugurate...

FROM PAGE-5

"We note with satisfaction that business interactions between India and Myanmar have been growing steadily over the years. A large number of Indian companies and experts are engaged in various sectors, including oil and gas, infrastructural projects, IT, education, banking and trading etc. Consequently, India is the fifth largest trading partner of Myanmar."

"I am confident that transport infrastructure projects such as the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project connecting North Western Regions of Myanmar and North Eastern Regions of India, and India-Myanmar-Thai Trilateral Highway will serve as a connectivity gateway not only between our two countries but between South and Southeast Asia as well."

"With the aim to foster sustainable development in Myanmar, we have laid down economic framework to support the long-term conservation and fair allocation of natural resources among the Regions and States, leading to national reconciliation through inclusive and people-centered approach."

"To create a more attractive, investor-friendly environment in Myanmar, a series of reforms have been undertaken. The most significant one is enactment of Myanmar Investment Law on 18th October 2016. Moreover, Myanmar Companies Law has also been enacted with

a view to facilitating company registration, reducing regulations for setting up of small companies, creating a favourable environment and improving practical compliance with rules and regulations."

"According to the new company law, we have introduced an electronic registration since 1st August 2018. All companies can now register or reregister online by using Myanmar Companies Online (MyCo)."

"Most importantly, we have developed the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP), a comprehensive eco-

and the fifth on natural resources management and environmental protection. Indeed, these goals are interrelated," said the Vice President. He continued, "Among them, the third goal of MSDP explicitly envisions a secure, accessible and conducive investment and business environment."

"We warmly welcome the business community from India to invest in Myanmar. Our government has given special emphasis on fulfilment of the basic needs of our people, particularly in good transportation, electrification, development of

ed with the message, "Last but not the least, I wish to encourage all of you to explore new business opportunities in Myanmar, enhance better understanding on the development in our country. We look forward to work together with you for mutual beneficial cooperation."

Next, President Shri Ram Nath Kovind of India delivered a speech saying, "I am delighted to be here to inaugurate the Fifth Enterprise India Show in Yangon. My participation in this event and the presence of a high-level business delegation from India underlines the importance we attach to our economic relations with Myanmar. We have leading Myanmar businesses and over 50 Indian companies, from globally reputed majors enterprises to SMEs engaged in cutting-edge manufacturing, participating in this event. I commend the efforts of the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce to host this Show and to draw an impressive participation."

"We need to complement our on-going efforts, and urgently so, with a Motor Vehicles Agreement. This will open new possibilities for progress and prosperity for people living along the border, for Myanmar to source goods and services more efficiently and economically, and for us to exchange eco-friendly products made from bamboo, water hyacinth and other natural vegetation. I am happy that

during my visit the Myanmar government has decided to extend visa-on-arrival-facility to Indian tourists arriving at Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay airports. This would give a major boost to our people-to-people exchanges and business ties."

"I am glad that Myanmar is already reforming its policies to attract business and capital. The creation of a separate Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations is a welcome step. I hope it will be able to increase the attractiveness of Myanmar as an investment destination. In the space of the last four years, India has risen 65 places in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking. We would be happy to share our experience in this regard with Myanmar."

"Myanmar has a unique place in our "Neighbourhood First" and "Act East" policies. We will continue to work together to increase our economic engagement that befits our close relations. And in doing so, we count on the energy, ideas and enterprise of our Industry and our business stakeholders."

Afterwards, Mr. Shreekanth Somany, Chairman of CII National MSME Council, delivered a speech expressing gratitude.

Next, Vice President U Myint Swe and the Indian President cut ceremonial ribbons and formally opened the Enterprise India Show. They then toured the exhibition booths at the Show.

—MNA ■

India stands the 11th position among 49 countries, investing in Myanmar. A total of 30 investment projects with the total pledge amounting to US\$763.567 million are permitted as of September 2018.

—Vice President U Myint Swe

nomic, environment and social reform agenda, in line with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. We believe that the MSDP will serve as a roadmap for our long-term development vision."

"Each goal of MSDP has its own vision and mission. The first goal emphasizes on peace and national reconciliation while the second one focuses on economic management, the third on job creation, the fourth on human capacity and social development,

smart cities and improvement of healthcare and education system."

"It is also important that the rights of stakeholders, including employees through the creation of fair and favourable working conditions are also prioritized as part of responsible investment approach. Our long-lasting friendship and mutual beneficial cooperation with India will benefit us to ensure responsible investment in Myanmar."

The Vice President concluded

Union Minister for Border Affairs receives UN Assistant Secretary General, UNDP Regional Director in Nay Pyi Taw

UNION Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung received Mr. Haoliang Xu, United Nations assistant secretary-general and director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), at the meeting hall of the Union Minister yesterday.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on development of border areas, human resource development of the ethnic people in the border area, the development of the state through the cooperation with INGOs, the status of striving to achieve internal peace by the State Government, coopera-

tion with the UN in the internal peace process, carrying out the affairs of Rakhine State as for the Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace and Development, citizenship rights, freedom of movement, education, healthcare, security, closure of IDP camps, repatriation process conducted by the State Government, the provision of humanitarian aids, resettlement and rehabilitation affairs, regional development, the elimination of the long-term conflict, harmonization, socio-economic development and creating employment opportunities. —MNA ■ (Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)



Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung holds talks with UNDP Regional Director Mr. Haoliang Xu at the meeting hall of the Union Minister yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Dr. Win Myat Aye separately receives UN Assistant Secretary General, Australia FM

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye separately received Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations and UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific Mr. Haoliang Xu and party and Australia Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senator the Honourable Marise Payne at the ministry's Maykhalar Hall yesterday.

In the meeting with UN Assistant Secretary General and party matters relating to projects jointly conducted by Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and UNDP, findings from visits to Rakhine State, works conducted by the ministry for stability and development of Rakhine State, latest status of implementing recommendations on Rakhine State, naturalization, freedom of movement, closing of IDP camps, works conducted on receiving returnees, Humanitarian assistants conducted by youth volunteers and Red Cross movement through UEHRD (Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine State) committee, co-operation works conducted with ASEAN Secretariat and AHA Centre (ASEAN

Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance), status of MoU between the ministry and UNDP and UNHCR, views and permission for Quick Impact Projects submitted by UNDP and participation of UNDP in resettlement and rehabilitation works were discussed.

During the meeting with the Australia Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senator, they cordially and openly discussed matters relating to development in Rakhine State, findings of Foreign Minister's visit to Rakhine State and any other queries, works con-

ducted together with UN organizations and international experts on a national strategy to close IDPs in Rakhine State, works conducted for receiving returnees by signing Myanmar-Bangladesh MoU, preparations and readiness of Myanmar, freedom of movement, naturalization, providing humanitarian assistance, UEHRD project on resettlement and rehabilitation, status of implementing recommendations on Rakhine State, security and rule of laws and continuing cooperation with Australia.—MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye meets with Australia Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senator the Honourable Marise Payne. PHOTO: MNA

17th Myanmar-China Border Trade Fair 2018 opens

DEPUTY Minister for Commerce U Aung Htoo delivered remarks at the opening ceremony for the 17th Myanmar-China Border Trade Fair 2018 at Muse Central Business District in Muse at 8 am yesterday.

The Deputy Minister said Border Trade Fairs were held alternatively in accord with the agreement on border region management and cooperation signed between Myanmar and China, and aim to reflect bilateral goodwill and cooperation of both countries and also to promote bilateral trade.

He said the union government intends to increase border region development, better transportation, improve service industries, and promote relations between people of the two countries in accord with cooperation guidelines of One Belt One Road.

The Deputy Minister said bilateral trade rises annually in part thanks to the adjacent proximity between Shan State of Myanmar and Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China. Myanmar's Ministry is also trying to upgrade trade relevant to current trends, to be fast and convenient in trade, conduct trade liberalization,

trade negotiations, raising awareness for trade and protection for consumers, he said. He added that mutual notification and information exchanges are needed to notify for terms of quality criteria, rules and regulations of trade and consumers protection to promote investment and trade between Myanmar and China.

Next, Ms. Huang Shan, Inspection officer of China's Trade Inspection and Quarantine Department, and Shan State Minister for Planning and Economy U Soe Nyunt Lwin delivered separate speeches. Senior ranking officers, merchants, and industrialists of the two countries, the participants in the trade fair and 400 residents attended the fair.

Mr. Weikam, Tei Hong District Administrator, met with Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo at New Star Light Information Centre where they openly discussed bilateral trade and investment. Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo and entourage inspected Shinphyu Gate, Men Wein Gate and Nantaw Gate where border trade is conducted.—MNA ■

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

First public meeting on Myanmar offshore block MD-7 held in Myeik

THE first public meeting on Myanmar offshore block MD-7 was held in the meeting hall of Myeik District's Fisheries Federation office in Tharkayta ward, Myeik Township, Taninthayi Region on 13 December. Myanmar offshore block MD-7 is operated by PTTEP SA, which is conducting oil exploration in collaboration with Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE). The Thailand-based PTTEP SA has a branch office in Kamayut Township of Yangon Region.

The meeting was attended by 100 people, including Region Hluttaw's Myeik constituency 2 MP Daw Yee Yee Cho, Had of Myeik District Fisheries Department U Hlwan Moe Zaw, officials from the Township and district level Departments, MOGE representative Daw Saw Thandar and staff, PTTEP exploration engineer U Wanna Win, PTTEP external relations manager, Ms.

Suphachittra Thongchivee, who came from Thailand with 5 other foreigners for the meeting, local fishery entrepreneurs, members from other social organizations, and media groups.

At the meeting, MOGE representative Daw Saw Thandar said MD-7 is located in the Andaman sea and lies at a distance of over 300 kilometers from Southwest of Myeik Town.

"The second meeting on MD-7 will be held in March, 2019. The purpose of the meeting will be to obtain the opinion of the people and submit a report to the ministries concerned. Therefore, we want to hear the voice of the people," she said.

Afterwards, PTTEP SA explained the progress of work on the block with video files.

PTTEP exploration engineer U Wanna Win said that the company was established in 1985 and it has been permitted to drill

on MD-7. He also explained the process of drilling oil and that drilling on the block will begin at the end of 2019.

Later, representatives from the Environmental Resource Management (ERM) and the Sustainable Environment Myanmar (SEM) Consultant Company, Daw Myat Thitsar Naing and Daw Nan Cherry Thein, said the environmental impact assessment for the project will be conducted in 5 stages and that measures will be taken to minimize the impact of the drilling.

"The company plans to help develop the region and improve education and healthcare for locals. The installation of the pipeline will be carried out depending on the permission of the government," said MOGE representative Daw Saw Thandar.—Myint Oo (Myeik) ■

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Forest Department to cooperate with NMNS Japan on bio diversity research

Forest Department will be cooperating with National Museum of Nature and Science (NMNS) of Japan to conduct bio diversity research on animal and plant species in Myanmar.

Myanmar is weak in conducting research on systematic classification of its bio-diverse animal and plant species and is yet to produce books like Flora of Myanmar, said an official.

A forum on preparing and amending scientific data on trees and plant species in Myanmar and a second coordination meeting to publish Flora of Myanmar was conducted by Forest Department

and NMNS at the assembly hall of Forest Research Department, Yezin, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning

At the meeting, Forest Department Director General Dr. Nyi Nyi Kyaw said the meeting will discuss ways to increase research works on flora, ways to start Flora of Myanmar works, establishment of an expert advisory group and formation of editors.

The Department of Forest has already signed a MoU for five-year terms with NMNS for research working processes said an official.—MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

N. Korea food production down in 2018: UN body

SEOUL (South Korea)—Food production has fallen this year in North Korea, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization.

Rice and maize are the North's main staples, but rice output was expected to be below average because of erratic rains and low irrigation supplies, the FAO said in its quarterly Crop Prospects and Food Situation report.

Unfavourable weather conditions also diminished maize yields, it added.

As a result the country would need to import 641,000 tonnes of food in the coming year, up from 456,000 tonnes this year, when it bought 390,000 tonnes and received 66,000

tonnes in food aid. There was a widespread lack of access to food in the North, it said in the document.

"Food insecurity continues to remain a key concern, with conditions aggravated by the below-average 2018 main season output," it said.

Agricultural production is chronically poor in the North, which only has a limited supply of arable land. The country has periodically been hit by famine, and hundreds of thousands of people died — estimates range into the millions — in the mid-1990s. North Korea was one of 40 countries — 31 of them in Africa — listed as in need of external assistance for food in the report.—AFP ■

Five foreigners arrested in Bali drug sweep

DENPASAR (Indonesia) — Five foreigners have been arrested in Bali for drug trafficking, authorities said Thursday, with a German and Peruvian possibly facing execution if convicted under Indonesia's strict drug laws.

The accused smugglers—also including a Chinese, a Malaysian and a Briton—were arrested separately over the past two weeks, Bali police said.

The arrests come less than a month after the first member of the Bali Nine heroin-trafficking gang was released from a prison on the holiday island after serving 13 years.

The Australian gang's accused ringleaders—Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan—were executed by firing squad in 2015, sparking a diplomatic row between Australia and Indonesia, which has



Jorge Rafael Alborno Gammara of Peru (L) and Frank Zeidler of Germany (R), suspected of smuggling drugs, are displayed to the media at a press conference at the customs office near Ngurah Rai international airport in Denpasar on the resort island of Bali on 13 December 2018. PHOTO: AFP

some of the world's stiffest drug laws. Bali police said Thursday they arrested 44-year-old Peruvian Jorge Rafael Alborno Gammara after he arrived at Ngurah Rai international airport from Dubai last week. "Officers found 4.08 kilograms of cocaine that

he was hiding inside the interior of his luggage," head of local immigration office Untung Basuki told a press conference Thursday.

German Frank Zeidler, 56, en route from Bangkok, was later arrested after officers said they found 2.1 kilos of hashish

inside his luggage—an amount that could also make it a death penalty case.

Meanwhile, a 45-year-old British designer, who was not identified, was detained after he received a package from Thailand with some 31 grams of liquid marijuana poured into essential oil bottles. On Saturday, 29-year-old Chinese national Cui Bao Lin was arrested at the airport with more than 200 ecstasy pills and over 160 grams of ketamine found in his bag, police said.

Malaysian Hamdi Izham Hakimi was also arrested the same day with a bag containing nearly 15 grams of marijuana and 11 ecstasy pills, according to authorities. Foreigners are regularly caught trying to bring drugs into Bali, which draws millions of visitors annually.—AFP ■

Floods kill 13 in central Viet Nam

HANOI (Viet Nam)—Floods caused by heavy downpours have killed 13 people in central Viet Nam, officials said Thursday, as farmers scrambled to save crops and livestock ahead of more bad weather forecast for this week.

Torrential rains have lashed six provinces in the centre of the country since Saturday, killing thousands of cows and chickens and flooding several cities—including the coastal resort town of Danang.

More than 50 centimetres (20 inches) of rain hit some areas, with more downpours expected in the coming days, the disaster management office said Thursday. "Thirteen people were killed, while one remains missing in Quang Ngai province," the office said.

Around 12,000 hectares of crops were destroyed, and some 160,000 livestock killed, it added.—AFP ■

Invitation for Bids

Loan Agreement No. MY-P14 dated 16/October/2015

IFB No. 18 (T)/DPTSC(PTP)/2018-2019

- The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received ODA Loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The Bid is invited by Department of Power Transmission and System Control (DPTSC) for Package 1: Design, Supply and Installation for 500kV Substation as follows;

Sr. No	Invitation for Bid	Descriptions	Issuing Date	Submission Deadline Date and Time	Non-refundable Document Fee
1	MY-P14, JICA, ODA Loan	Package 1: Design, Supply and Installation for 500kV Phayargyi and Hlaingthayar Substation	17/12/2018	15/03/2019 (13:00hr)	Purchase order with Myanmar Kyats which is equivalent to USD 1,000

- The Eligible Nationality of the Bidder shall be Japan in the case of single contractor.

In case of a joint venture, such joint venture will be eligible provided that the nationality of lead partner is Japan, that the nationality of the other partner is Japan and/or the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and total share of work of Japanese partners in the joint venture is more than fifty percent (50%) of the contract amount. This scheme is based on applicable guidelines of Japanese ODA loan.

- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the website (<http://www.moe.gov.mm>) or the documents from the Material Planning Department, Department of Power Transmission and System Control, Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Office No.27, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
- Bid Documents must be delivered to the address below mentioned on or before the deadline date and time.
- The Bid must be accompanied by a bid security of not less than four hundred million Japanese Yen (JPY 400,000,000).
- Technical Bid will be opened on 15/03/2019 at 13:00 hr at the Department of Power Transmission and System Control, Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Office No.27, Nay Pyi Taw in the presence of representatives from Bidders.
- Any Request for the extension of bid submission deadline shall not be allowed.

Tender Committee
Department of Power Transmission and System Control
Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Office No.27
Nay Pyi Taw Myanmar
Telephone: 067-3410282, 3410209

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Construction Department of Urban and Housing Development Invitation for Expression of Interest For Urban Redevelopment Project

An urban redevelopment project, that can support the socio-economic and urban development on the land area of 6.982 acres at No (24-A), Baho Road, Alone Township, Yangon, is planned to implement by the private sector investment. The aim of seeking Expression of Interest is to empanel the competent investors (Local or Foreign) for construction, operation and management of the project under BOT system. Details including prescribed format are available at Department of Urban and Housing Development (DUHD), Office No-40, Nay Pyi Taw from (14-12-2018) to (28-12-2018). The last date of submission is on (15-1-2019) at 4:00 pm.

Contact Person:

Daw Moe Thida	U Ye Sis Min
Director	Deputy Director
DUHD, Office (40)	DUHD, Office (40)
Nay Pyi Taw	Nay Pyi Taw
067-3407579	09-43259559
	067-3407701

Transferred distributor for Registration Pesticides

Distribution and registration processes of below pesticides produced by Zagro Singapore Pte Ltd. will have been transferred from Magnate Group Co., Ltd. to Zagro Myanmar Ltd. So, if there are any protest, please protest to this address: Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Gyogone (West), Insein during (14) days from this announcement.

No.	Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Reg Type	Reg.No.
1	Bravo 10 SL	Imidacloprid 10% w/v SL	Full	F2016-1225
2	Fezmet 40 EC	Diamethoate 40% EC	Provisional	2011-1456
3	Bravo 20 WP	Imidacloprid 20% w/w WP	Provisional	2013-1854
4	Bravo 70 WP	Imidacloprid 70% WP	Provisional	2013-1859
5	Bravo 20 SL	Imidacloprid 20% SL	Provisional	2016-3192
6	Neocidin 10 G	Diazinon 10% w/w	Provisional	2013-1858
7	Vector 1% SG	Temephos 1% SG	Full	F2010-495
8	Agro Mancozeb 80 WP	Mancozeb 80% WP	Full	F2011-478
9	Telepower MZ	Mancozeb 64% + Metalaxyl 8% w/w WP	Full	F2016-1229
10	Za Aktive 25 WP	Metalaxyl 25% WP	Provisional	2011-1457
11	Stilt 25 EC	Propiconazole 25% EC	Provisional	2013-1855
12	Hexacon 5 SC	Hexaconazole 5% SC	Provisional	2013-1856
13	Agrosin M 70 WP	Thiophanate Methyl 70% WP	Full	F2011-809
14	Taniamine 720 SL	2,4-D Amine 72% w/v SL	Provisional	2014-2105

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TEL : 95-1-656718, 656719, 656720, Fax: 95-1-656721
E-mail: info@magnatemyanmar.com

Climate talks must be rescued, warns UN chief

KATOWICE (Poland) — UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres sought to rescue deeply troubled climate talks in Poland on Wednesday, warning the battle against global warming is a “matter of life and death today.”

The two-week talks are tasked with breathing life into the 2015 Paris Agreement, which vows to cap global warming at “well under” two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and 1.5°C if possible.

But efforts to elaborate a “rule book” for the Paris pact and boost the carbon-cutting pledges have hit a wall, even as a barrage of scientific reports have warned that only immediate and radical measures can avert even more catastrophic extreme weather.

“The key political issues remain unresolved,” Guterres told ministers and diplomats only 48 hours before the 195-nation meeting in the Polish city of Katowice, in the heart of coal country.

“To waste this opportunity would compromise our last best chance to stop runaway climate change,” he said. “It would not only be immoral, it would be suicidal.” The Paris pact is also meant to funnel hundreds of billions of dollars to poor countries already feeling the sting of deadly storms, heatwaves and droughts made worse by climate change.

Scientists have concluded that such impacts are already unmistakable with only 1C of warming so far. “The eyes of the world are upon us,” said



A recent study showed that parts of the Antarctic ice sheet — which holds enough frozen water to bury every major coastal city in the world — are melting far more quickly than thought only a few years ago. PHOTO: AFP

Guterres, who had not planned to return after addressing the opening plenary 10 days ago but came back to push for progress.

A major scientific report called for by the UN climate body concluded in October that Earth’s rise in temperature must be capped even lower — at 1.5C — to avoid the danger of runaway warming.

‘redline issue’

But a handful of countries at the talks, led by the United States and Saudi Arabia, have blocked efforts to endorse the so-called IPCC report, which many developing countries see as essential.

“The IPCC report on 1.5°C is the basis for all future action, on what we need to do,” Vanuatu Foreign Minister Ralph Regenvanu told AFP.

Endorsing the report’s findings at the conclusion of the UN forum “is a red line issue for us.”

Other trouble spots include “transparency”

— which means different things to different countries, depending on what is at stake.

Rich nations, for example, are pushing hard for high standards of accounting to keep track of emissions reductions. Poorer nations say they need more time — and lots of money — to comply.

But the most contentious issue on the table is the reluctance of many nations — including the Polish government, which as host presides over the complex negotiations — to underscore the need to enhance voluntary carbon-cutting pledges annexed to the Paris pact.

Even if current promises are fulfilled, Earth would heat up by well over 3°C, enough to tug at the fabric of civilisation, say scientists.

“Nobody — not even so-called superpowers — can negotiate with the laws of physics,” said Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, a Belgian climatologist and a former

vice-chair of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which produced the report on 1.5°C.

‘Ice melts at zero’

A recent study shows parts of the Antarctic ice sheet — which holds enough frozen water to bury every major coastal city in the world — is melting far more quickly than thought only a few years ago.

“Ice melts at zero degrees Celsius — that’s 32 degrees Fahrenheit,” quipped van Ypersele, converting into the temperature scale used in the United States.

The talks will now focus on hammering out a final text, composed of “decisions,” including one adopting the rule book.

In an attempt to build momentum for stronger action, the 47-strong bloc of Least Developed Countries joined with a couple dozen other nations to revive the so-called High Ambition Coalition that help push the Paris treaty across the finish line. Missing, however, compared to 2015 were the United States and nearly half the countries in the European Union, suggesting that it will be difficult push.—AFP■

Green thumb spruces up Bangladesh one tree at a time

JESSORE (Bangladesh) — Ohid Sarder prides a rusted nail from a tree and drops it into his bucket, another eyesore scrubbed from the countryside as he embarks on a one-man mission to clean up Bangladesh.

The 53-year-old self-professed tree hugger has been riding his bicycle across the country, in a grassroots effort to free trees of the billboards and clutter nailed to their trunks.

Trees in Bangladesh are often used as free advertising space, with every available inch of wood plastered with placards until the trunk is barely visible.

The billboards might disintegrate over time but the nails remain embedded deep in the wood — agitating tree-lover Sarder, who has devoted his life to healing these wounds.

“Trees have life. They feel pain just as we do,” the self-styled conservationist told AFP in Jessore district in the country’s southwest.

“I have seen how

these nails have killed trees, and how they are causing them pain.”

Sarder grew up idolising Jagdish Chandra Bose, a prominent Bengali botanist who wrote about the emotions of plants in the early decades of the 20th century.


Inspired, Sarder began planting trees in Jhenaidah, his home district, and neighbouring Jessore, a passion he kept up for decades.

But this year it occurred to him that planting trees was not enough — he needed to protect those already under threat.

Traversing battered roads with a bicycle, bucket and a metal rod welded with prongs, Sarder began prying thick nails and spikes from abused trees across the country.

Since he began his beautification drive in July he has collected more than 80 kilogrammes (176 pounds) of them.

“It looks easy, but it isn’t. It takes a lot of effort to pull out a rusted nail that has been there for years,” he said.—AFP■



Tun Thwin Mining Company Limited (TTMC) and JSM Power Pte Ltd

News Release

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT of a 600MW Ultra Super Critical Coal Fire Power Plant in Kalewa Township, Sagaing Region.

TTMC and JSM Power are planning to build a 600MW Ultra Super Critical Coal Fire Power Plant supplied in coal from the Kalewa and Kale Townships mines. The project consists of three main components, which includes the Power Plant, the coal conveyor belt, and the water intake facility and temporary jetty for construction.

As part of the approval process, TTMC and JSM Power are undertaking an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study. The purpose of the EIA is to understand how the Project may impact the environment and the people living and working close to the Project area and identify ways to manage any changes that may occur through the development of mitigation measures.

Public Participation meeting to present the result of the scoping phase will be held in Kale and Kalewa Townships as well as in the villages near the Project site in December 2018.

More info about TTMC and the Project can be found at:
http://www.tunthwinmining.com/about_us.htm

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(27/ 2018)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(a)	IIFB-037(18-19)	CNG Ground Storage Cascade (3) Sets	US\$
(b)	IFB-038(18-19)	Echometer Digital Well Analyzer (1) Set	US\$
(c)	DMP/L-153(18-19)	Portable Fire Fighting Pump (1) Set	Ks
(d)	DMP/L-154(18-19)	Mobile Type Welding Machine Engine Driven 400 AMP and Accessories (7) Sets	Ks
(e)	DMP/L-155(18-19)	Spark Plug and Electronic Cards for 1.1 MW Kongsberg Gas Turbine	Ks
(f)	DMP/L-156(18-19)	Electrical Spares for 1000 KVA Transformer Installation (5) Items	Ks
(g)	DMP/L-157(18-19)	1.5 MW (1875 KVA) Gas Engine Driven Generating Set attach with Switch Gear Panel (1) Set	Ks
(h)	DMP/L-158(18-19)	Spares for GM 6V 71 Engine (46) Items	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moe.gov.mm) as from **12 December 2018**. Tender forms will not be sold.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **14:00 pm** on **9 January 2019**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time- 9-1-2019, 14:00 pm

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206

Google chief trusts AI makers to regulate the technology

SAN FRANCISCO (United States)—Google chief Sundar Pichai said fears about artificial intelligence are valid but that the tech industry is up to the challenge of regulating itself, in an interview published on Wednesday.

Tech companies building AI should factor in ethics early in the process to make certain artificial intelligence with “agency of its own” doesn’t hurt people, Pichai said in an interview with the Washington Post.

“I think tech has to realize it just can’t build it, and then fix it,” Pichai said. “I think that doesn’t work.”

The California-based internet giant is a leader in the development of AI, competing in the smart software race with titans such as Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, IBM and Facebook.

Pichai said worries about harmful uses of AI are “very legitimate” but that the industry should be trusted to regulate its use.

“Regulating a technol-



In this file photo taken on 1 November 2018, Sundar Pichai, CEO, Google Inc., speaks at the New York Times DealBook conference in New York City. **PHOTO: AFP**

ogy in its early days is hard, but I do think companies should self-regulate,” he said. “This is why we’ve tried hard to articulate a set of AI principles. We may not have gotten everything right, but we thought it was important to start a conversation.” Google in June published a set of internal AI principles, the first being that AI should be socially beneficial.

“We recognize that such powerful technology raises equally powerful

questions about its use,” Pichai said in a memo posted with the principles.

“As a leader in AI, we feel a deep responsibility to get this right.”

Google vowed not to design or deploy AI for use in weapons, surveillance outside of international norms, or in technology aimed at violating human rights. The company noted that it would continue to work with the military or governments in areas such as cybersecurity, training,

recruitment, healthcare, and search-and-rescue.

AI is already used to recognize people in photos, filter unwanted content from online platforms, and enable cars to drive themselves.

The increasing capabilities of AI have triggered debate about whether computers that could think for themselves would help cure the world’s ills or turn on humanity as has been depicted in science fiction works.—AFP ■

SIRIUS experiment will help pick right crews for interplanetary missions — NASA

MOSCOW—The isolation experiment SIRIUS scheduled to start in March 2019 in Moscow will help better understand who should be included in crews on long space flights, Chief Scientist of NASA Human Research Program Jennifer Fogarty told TASS on the sidelines of the 17th Conference on Space Biology and

Medicine held in Moscow.

“The big picture from our participation in SIRIUS experiment is to understand isolation and confinement for a culturally diverse crew. What kind of stresses this causes... The goal of experiment is to inform what kind of crew should explore planets,” Fogarty said.

“All the data show us that we should continue on that trend. Of course, people are comfortable within a single cultural crew. But being comfortable with it doesn’t mean it’s the right thing. We are trying to challenge some of these norms, but doing so with data, not just with what we feel about it,” she added.

Fogarty said that there are many risks in space, both individual and collective. “Measuring those changes over time, we will see how we can build countermeasures, how they can be prevented, or if this has happened how could we help the crew members treat themselves, because in the future the missions will be autonomous,” she noted.

When asked about whether political tensions will affect scientific cooperation between Russian and the US on space, Fogarty said joint work has been relatively unaffected by changes in the political climate. “We have always worked really well together - ISS [International Space Station], SIRIUS. I think planet exploration is possible under international partnership,” she concluded.—Tass ■



Chief Scientist of NASA Human Research Program Jennifer Fogarty said the main goal of the SIRIUS experiment is “to understand isolation and confinement for a culturally diverse crew”. **PHOTO: TASS**

U Win Shein (a) Tan In Sin
BEHS -2, Myeik
Aged 84

U Win Shein, 84, beloved son of (U Au Kyat-Daw Au Phum), son-in-law of (Daw Tin Nyunt-Daw Mya Sein), husband of Daw Kyi Kyi (BEHS-3Myeik), younger brother of (U It Hlaing-Daw Hla Kyi), (U In Swe)-Daw Kyi Kyi Wah and Daw Kyin Hon, father of Ko Thet Moe Shein-Ma Cho Cho Lwin(USA), Ko Kyaw Moe Shein-Ma Kay Kay Khaing (Singapore), Dr Zaw Moe Shein-Dr Saw Yu Mon, Ko Aung Soe-Ma Thin Myat Aye (Japan), grandfather of Ma Yin Myat Noe and Mg Nyan Linn Thu Ta, passed away at 1:20pm on 12-12-2018 at his home, No.686, 4th floor of Han Myint Moh Mini Condo, Thumana-3 Street, 16/4 Ward in Thingangyun Township, Yangon.

Family and Friends are invited to attend the cremation that will be held at 1pm on 16-12-2018 at Yay-way cemetery. Buses from home will leave for Yay-way cemetery at 11:00am, while buses form Myeik Association leave at 10:30am. Family and Friends are also invited to attend the funeral services that will be held at the home from 9am to 12:00pm on 18-12-2018 (Tuesday).

Bereaved family

Glen Cusack (ဦးကျော်ညွန့်)

Age 73 years

(Maymyo and Mawlamyine)

(ပြည်နယ်စီမံရေးရာမန်နေဂျာကုန်သွယ်လယ်ယာ-အငြိမ်းစား)

Son of Cyril Cusack + Daw Thein (Maymyo), brother of Jvan + Jean Cusack (Sydney Australia) and Laurie + Noreen Cusack (Maymyo). Son in law of Eric + Gemma Nelson (Mawlamyine), husband of Julia San San Lwin, Father of warren Kyaw Min Lwin, Caroline Thin Marlar Kyaw + Noel Pyae Phyo Oo (Newyork), Anne Marie Kyae Mone Kyaw + Pius Ye Lin Aung, Grand father of Angelina, Gavin and John Paul II Passed away peacefully at his residence in Yangon on the 9th December 2018 at 11:15 am.

China’s Chang’e-4 probe enters lunar orbit

BEIJING — China’s Chang’e-4 probe decelerated and entered the lunar orbit Wednesday, completing a vital step on its way to make the first-ever soft landing on the far side of the moon, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) announced.

After flying about 110 hours from earth, an engine on the probe was ignited when it was 129 km above the surface of the moon, in line with instructions sent from a control center in Beijing at 4:39 p.m., and then the probe slowed and entered an elliptical lunar orbit with the perilune at about 100 km at 4:45 pm., said CNSA.

The probe, including a lander and a rover, was launched by a Long March-3B carrier rocket last Saturday from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China’s Sichuan Province, opening a new chapter in lunar exploration.

As the rocket was able to send the probe into orbit precisely as planned, the control center only adjusted the probe’s orbit once on Sunday and also canceled two pre-planned orbit trimmings before the near-moon deceleration, CNSA said.

Next, the control

center will adjust the probe’s orbit around the moon and test the communication link between the probe and the relay satellite “Queqiao,” which is operating in the halo orbit around the second Lagrangian (L2) point of the earth-moon system.

Afterward, the control center will choose a proper time to land the probe on the far side of the moon, according to CNSA.

Since the moon’s revolution cycle is the same as its rotation cycle, the same side always faces the earth.

The other face, most of which cannot be seen from earth, is called the far side or dark side, not because it’s dark, but because most of it remains unknown.

The Chang’e-4 mission will be a key step in revealing the mysterious far side of the moon.

The scientific tasks of the Chang’e-4 mission include low-frequency radio astronomical observation, surveying the terrain and landforms, detecting the mineral composition and shallow lunar surface structure, and measuring the neutron radiation and neutral atoms to study the environment on the far side of the moon, according to CNSA.—Xinhua ■

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

Steam locomotive brings back colonial-era memories to tourists

TOURISTS from Germany, Japan, and Switzerland are currently taking a joyride on a World War II steam locomotive on the railroad section between Nay Pyi Taw and Bago.

The train carrying 24 tourists aged 70-90 left Nay Pyi Taw on 11 December and reached Madauk yesterday.

"They wanted to see the train made during the British age. They wanted to watch the smoke coming out of the chimney of the locomotive and take photos to show others when they return home" said U Aung Tun Oo, the driver of the locomotive.

The train completed the journey to Madauk in Nyaung-glyabin Township, Bago Region,



Tourists taking pictures the World War II steam locomotive on the railroad near Nay Pyi Taw.

PHOTO: U THET LWIN

in three legs, Nay Pyi Taw-Toungoo, Toungoo-Pyuntasa, and Pyuntasa-Madauk. The trip will end in Bago after three more legs.

There are 35 steam locomotives in Myanmar. Among them, only three locomotives are running. This is the second time the

steam locomotive has been operated in Myanmar in 2018.—U Thet Lwin ■

(Translated by JT)

MIFER to streamline business license application process

THE Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations (MIFER) is making arrangements to streamline the business license application process for making foreign and local investments, said U Aung Naing Oo, the secretary of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

To cut down red tape, the ministry will take two steps - formulate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and implement a Single Window system for applications.

"We will draft SOPs for eliminating unnecessary delays in processing applications. The second step will be the implementation of a single window," said U Aung Naing Oo.

"We will draft the SOPs in such a way that the steps in the application process are reduced. For example, when one applies for a license from the Ministry, one has to undergo five steps. But now, we will reduce the number of steps to two or three. We will also cancel the requirement for submission of some

documents. Previously, one had to spend three months to get a license. But now, applicants will get their licenses within just a few days or a week at the most," he said.

"Licenses will be issued at one place to help investors to start work easily. Once we implement the single window system, applicants will be able to submit applications online," he said.

"The single window will be the online system. We will start with the formulation of SOPs, which has to be done manually.

Later, we will introduce an online SOP system. We are also thinking of introducing a single-stop system, which is the same as the one-stop service. But one-stop service will be provided only for MIC-related matters," said U Aung Naing Oo. The State Counsellor has already given guidelines to all ministries to formulate and adopt SOPs. Currently, the ministries' procedures are being scrutinized so we can draft the SOPs as soon as possible, he added.—Nyein Nyein ■ *(Translated by Hay Mar)*

Myanmar to finalize draft of rice standards, specifications this month

THE DRAFTING of new standards and specifications for rice will be finished this month, according to the Myanmar Rice Standardization Committee. The drafting process for rice standardization is 95 per cent complete, while the draft for paddy is 60 per cent finished.

Myanmar is drafting the new standards and specifications to ensure rice produced in the country meets international standards, and to bolster exports and increase earnings through improving the quality of rice and paddy production. The new standards will also be in line with current market conditions.

Officials from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank and the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) are jointly making the draft. A series of discussions on Myanmar's paddy standardization and specification is going on currently.

"We are revising the draft



Workers arrange packs of rice at a warehouse in Yangon.

PHOTO: XINHUA

in line with the international standard. Local and international demand for rice and paddy quality varies to a certain extent. Local consumers demand smaller-sized paddy compared with international consumers. Therefore, to meet international standardization, we have to adjust the specification. Additionally, the

measurement method is another controversial problem as there is no consistency in measurement units such as kilograms and tons," said U Nay Lin Zin, the joint General-Secretary of the MRF.

The weight measurement per bag varies between regions and states, with 100 pounds mak-

ing one bag in Mon State, 102 pounds in Rakhine State, 105 pounds in central Myanmar, 108 pounds in Yangon, 110.5 pounds in Pyay.

"The price of rice also varies across the regions and states according to the difference in weight measurement. Consumers tend to choose the cheaper bags without knowing this fact. Actually, the cheaper bags have a lower weight, resulting in a loss for the customers," said a rice grower from Shwebo Township.

"Once Myanmar's rice standards and specifications are brought in line with the international standard, exporters and rice millers will not have difficulty following the rules and regulations. However, the local market will take some time to adjust to the change. Therefore, awareness campaigns about the prescribed rice standards and specifications will be required," the grower said.—GNLM ■

Myanmar women's traditional boat race team wins gold in 19th ASEAN University Games

MYANMAR'S university sports teams have grabbed a total of nine gold medals, nine silver medals, and 13 bronze medals so far in the 19th ASEAN University Games, being held in Nay Pyi Taw.

Traditional boat race, athletics, sepak takraw, volleyball, badminton, chess, golf, archery, basketball, tennis, and swimming competitions were held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday as part of the Games. In the 500-meter women's traditional boat race competition, Myanmar won the gold medal, Thailand secured silver, and Singapore garnered the bronze medal.

In the 500-meter men's traditional boat race competition, Thailand secured the gold medal, Myanmar grabbed the silver medal, and Singapore earned the bronze medal. In the 500-meter men/women mixed traditional boat race competition, the Thailand team secured the gold medal, the Myanmar team won silver,



Traditional boat race competitions in 19th ASEAN University Games being held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

and the Singapore team took the bronze medal. In the women's 10,000-meter athletic competition, Viet Nam's Pham Thi Hue secured the gold medal, Myanmar's Yin Nyein Aye grabbed the silver medal, and Singapore's Nicole Low Sui Xuan won the bronze

medal. In the women's 400-meter race, Quach Thi Lan (Viet Nam) secured the gold medal, Ratchada (Thailand) grabbed the silver medal, and Thi Thi Mon (Myanmar) won the bronze medal.

In the men's pétanque competition, Thawat Khachin (Thai-

land) grabbed the gold medal, Brian See Wei Ren (Singapore) won the silver medal, and Htet Nay Lin (Myanmar) won the bronze medal. In the men's double sepak takraw competition, Myanmar beat Malaysia 2:1.

In the volleyball semifi-

nals, Thailand beat Myanmar with scores of 25-19, 25-20, and 25-17.

In the women's badminton singles, Myanmar's Thet Htar Thuzar beat a player from Indonesia by a score of 2:0.—MNA ■
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Lyon reach Champions League last 16, Bayern top group

PARIS (France)—Lyon clinched the final Champions League last-16 place as Nabil Fekir's second-half strike grabbed a 1-1 draw against Shakhtar Donetsk in a snowy Kiev on Wednesday, while Bayern Munich pipped Ajax to top spot in Group E. Bru-

no Genesio's Lyon needed to avoid defeat against Shakhtar to progress from Group F with Manchester City, and a fifth successive draw in the competition achieved that aim. "It was hard in difficult conditions. We gave ourselves a fright and it's a pity

we didn't kill off the game in the first half," Lyon midfielder Houssem Aouar told RMC Sport. "The main thing is that we've qualified." Shakhtar forged ahead midway through the opening period with what proved their only shot of the first half, just

seconds after Lyon forward Bertrand Traore had been denied by Andriy Pyatov when clean through one-on-one with the goalkeeper.

The Burkina Faso international was made to pay for his profligacy, as Junior Moraes

slotted home after being picked out by Ismaily. Lyon continued to dominate, though, and finally equalised in the 65th minute as Nabil Fekir hammered a left-footed strike into the top corner following excellent play by Memphis Depay.—AFP ■

Manchester United through as runners-up after limp defeat to Valencia

VALENCIA (Spain)—Manchester United squandered the chance to win their Champions League group on Wednesday after a lacklustre display got what it deserved in a 2-1 defeat to Valencia.

Already through to the last 16, Jose Mourinho made eight changes at the Mestalla, including a return for Paul Pogba, but United were largely outplayed by their Spanish opponents, who sit 15th in La Liga. After the game, Mourinho seemed to aim a dig at those players to have come in. "Nothing surprised me at all," he said. Carlos Soler's driven

shot and a Phil Jones own-goal put Valencia two up early in the second half before United came alive in the final minutes after Marcus Rashford's header gave them brief hope. Perhaps Mourinho and his players had assumed Juventus would win away at Young Boys but the Italians' surprise 2-1 loss meant United had first place within their grasp. Instead, they go through as runners-up into Monday's draw for the last 16, with Real Madrid, Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Paris Saint-Germain, Borussia Dortmund and Porto all potential opponents. As group

winners, they would have had Atletico Madrid, Roma, Schalke, Ajax or Lyon.

"Apart from a couple of clubs that are clearly much better than the others, I don't think the draw will be significantly different," Mourinho said. "There are teams that finish second that the ones that finish first will not be happy to play against." Porto would probably be the favoured pick but on this evidence, they might feel the same about United. After all, Valencia also made changes, eight of them, with their fate resigned to dropping into the Europa League.—AFP ■

Rank	SEA Nations	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	THAILAND	22	19	13	54
2	INDONESIA	21	10	14	45
3	MALAYSIA	10	19	14	43
4	MYANMAR	9	9	13	31
5	SINGAPORE	3	6	8	17
6	LAOS	3	4	1	8
7	VIETNAM	3	0	0	3
8	TIMOR LESTE	1	0	0	1
-	BRUNEI	0	0	0	0
-	CAMBODIA	0	0	0	0
-	PHILIPPINES	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		72	67	63	202