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Message from the President U Win Myint, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on Commemoration of the 71st Independence Day 4th January 2019

Dear Esteemed Citizens,

On the auspicious occasion of the 71st Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to all national races.

Myanmar, which had existed as an independent and sovereign country throughout the history, was invaded by the British Colonists in 1824, 1852 and 1885 and lost its independence in November 1885. To regain independence, all national races together with the sharp-witted and patriotic leaders, sacrificed their blood and sweat with untiring perseverance and diligence, under the guidance of the national hero, the founding father of Tatmadaw, and the architect of independence General Aung San, who had both courage and fortitude.



Due to the united effort of all the nationals, Myanmar regained its independence and emerged as the sovereign state, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on 4th January 1948. The architect of Independence General Aung San claimed that "... only when the country practises the democratic system, will there

be independence. Only that system ensures peace. Therefore, we must aim to build a democratic nation." He also stated that "In my opinion, we cannot build a Unitary State, meant only for one major national race. We must build a federal state, specifying the rights of each national race.

After gaining independence, due to the divide-and-rule policy practised by the colonists, trust among ethnic brethren became thinner and suspicion grew stronger, resulting in different kinds of conflicts among national races. As we have inherited negative consequences, peace and stability of the country has deteriorated and our country has been lagged behind other countries.

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Honouring the 71st Anniversary Independence Day

71st Anniversary Independence Day National Objectives

1. All National Ethnic Races to defend and protect with "collective strength" to ensure Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of the Unity of National Ethnic Races and Perpetuation of National Sovereignty.
2. For the emergence of a Democratic Federal Union, to strive towards creating a suitable Constitution for the State in accordance with democratic standards.
3. To effectively combat and protect against the use of drugs and narcotic substances which can harm and erode the health and character of all citizens.
4. To continuously strive with determined effort for the balanced and equitable development of all states and regions.
5. To assist from all fronts the Union Government's efforts for private sector development and the emergence of a fully-developed market economy.





Sitagu Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Nannisara delivers sermon to Buddhist devotees at New Year Dhamma Congregation in People's Park in Yangon. **PHOTO: HLA MOE**

Over 200,000 people attend third day of New Year Dhamma Congregation in Yangon

OVER 200,000 people attended the third day of New Year Dhamma congregation organized by the Yangon Region Government at the People's Park yesterday.

Sitagu Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Nannisara delivered a sermon titled "Bojjhanga Sutta." Among the congregation were Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and wife, Yangon Region Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Yangon

region ministers and Hluttaw representatives.

The Yangon Region government has conducted these annual three-day New Year Dhamma congregations starting from 2016.

Eleven sub-committees comprising of invitation, transport, security, health etc. were formed for the convenience of the people attending the event.

U Tin Win from Ahlon Township said "Listening

to sermons of the Sayadaws makes the mindset of the people become better. They got to know what they didn't know. I've been in attendance since the New Year Dhamma congregations were started and this is the third time. Buddhists could not be detached from gatherings such as these sermons. As we come of age, we should become more engrossed in religion. I'm glad to see the participation of youngsters and

youths. Listening to the sermons of the Sayadaws instead of wasting time would lead them onto the path of being good and well-mannered."

Daw Khin Myat Htwe from Dagon Myothit (North) Township spoke of her happiness as a Myanmar citizen and a Buddhist on holding of the event. Religious knowledge are increased from listening to the sermons, she said.

Dr. Hla Htwe from Baho-

si Hospital who was providing health care service donation said, "Bahosi Hospital is providing health care service donation to the third day of the New Year Dhamma congregation with 8 doctors and over 40 health care personnel. Some devotees who felt dizzy or had hyper-tension came for treatment." Donors were also providing free transportation with taxis and mini-buses for the devotees.—Zaw Gyi, Min Thit (MNA)

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat receives Egyptian Ambassador



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat meets with Egyptian Ambassador Mr. Khaled Mohamed Abdelrahman Abdelsalam at Pyithu Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received Bangkok based Egyptian Ambassador Mr. Khaled Mohamed Abdelrahman Abdelsalam at the Pyithu Hluttaw guest hall, Pyithu

Hluttaw Building, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting matters relating to increasing bilateral relations were discussed and views exchanged.

Also present at the meeting were Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw Office.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker receives Singapore Ambassador

PYIDAUNGSU Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein received Singapore Ambassador Ms. Vanessa Chan at the Pyithu Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting matters relating to increasing cooperation and relations between the parliaments and peoples of the two countries were discussed.

After the meeting the Sin-

gaporean ambassador donated books and documents on Singapore and multimedia support materials for the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw library to U Tun Tun Hein.

The meeting was attended by Director General U Kyaw Soe, Deputy Director General U Zaw Hein and officials of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein meets with Singapore Ambassador Ms. Vanessa Chan at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

“Let us strive collectively to create such a nation as was envisaged by the architects of our independence: a nation practicing pure principles that guarantee justice and freedom, and equal rights that enable all our people to live in peace.”

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the 2nd Anniversary of the Government on 1st April, 2018.)



Phan Khon game, a Myanmar traditional game.
PHOTO: KYI MYO THE I

Message from the President U Win Myint, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on Commemoration of the 71st Independence Day 4th January 2019

FROM PAGE-1

Taking lessons from those negative experiences in history, all the national citizens must strive for non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of the national unity and perpetuation of sovereignty with the collaborative effort of all the national brethren, so that our country would eternally stand as a proud, peaceful and prosperous Union in the world.

Now is the time when all the national citizens are trying to build a Democratic Federal Union envisioned by General Aung San, the architect of independence and other patriotic leaders, under the leadership of the government. The 21st Century Panglong Union Peace conferences have been held for national

reconciliation and peace. The third 21st Century Panglong Conference has successfully been convened and agreements on democratic practices and federal principles have been reached. A peaceful and prosperous democratic federal union will surely be built through mutual trust and cooperation and by strengthening the national unity and national reconciliation.

The main ingredient required for the success of peace process and building a democratic federal union is trust. All the national brethren must cooperate in finding solutions, having complete trust among them. With the everlasting solidarity of all the national races, we must strive together for the emergence of a constitution drafted in accordance with the democratic practices and federal principles that suit our nation.

Thus, I would like to urge all the national people to work in unity for the realization of the following five national objectives of the 71st Anniversary of the Independence Day, with commitment to build a democratic federal union whereby all national people can enjoy justice, freedom, equal rights and self-determination.

- To protect our nation with the ‘united effort’ for the non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of the national unity and perpetuation of sovereignty
- To strive for the emergence of a constitution that is suitable for the country drafted in accordance with democratic principles and norms to be able to build a Democratic

Federal Union

- To effectively prohibit the drug abuses that can harm the health and morality of the nationals
- To ensure the well-balanced development of states and regions
- To support the government’s endeavour for the development of the proper market-oriented economic system and the development of the private sector

I would like to urge all the national people to strive with good will for the building of a democratic federal union; for peace, prosperity and modernization of the union; and for everyone to enjoy the fruits of Democracy regardless of the states and regions they reside in.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses NWRC coord meeting

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, who is the Chairman of the National Water Resources Committee (NWRC) addressed the NWRC coordination meeting 1/2019 on the committee’s future work processes held at the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning

The Vice President said nine meetings including today’s meeting were held after the NWRC was reformed. Future work process coordination meetings of NWRC were held with the aims of developing water and related sectors, effective management and usage of water resources, to support effective and beneficial cooperation with international organizations and coordinating on difficulties faced in works implemented on water resources sector. The majority of the works have been implemented and efforts will be made towards implementing the remaining works.

At the NWRC coordination



Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses the coordination meeting of National Water Resources Committee in Ministry of Transport and Communications in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

meeting 3/2018 held on 31 August 2018 after the occurrence of flooding and inundation in 2018 decisions were made to prevent blockage of drains in cities and towns to prevent flooding and inundation; formulation of regulations for the people in disposing of wastes; implementation of

arrangements to reduce flooding and inundation in Sittaung, Thanlwin, Bago, Shwekyin, Bilin, Taninthayi rivers and Daung Myu Creek; inspect the strengths of dams and reservoir and to educate, inform and notify people living downstream of dams and reservoirs; inspect the embank-

ments in Taninthayi and Hpa-an towns and to install water outlets and sluice gates along roads, railways and related places. The majority of the decisions have already been implemented.

The country faces storms and cyclones, flooding, inundation and bank erosions during

the rainy season and water scarcity in the summer in the same way as other South East Asian countries. The State is spending a lot of funds yearly on prevention and mitigation works including construction of cyclone shelters as well as conducting relief and rehabilitation works for people who face water related natural disasters. Soon the hot and dry summer will come and relevant ministries and organizations are to conduct preparation works to reduce and mitigate water scarcity and disruption of water supply. Similarly, continued cooperation and coordination between relevant ministries and state/region governments have to be made towards electricity generation, potable and irrigation water distribution, safe and secure waterway transports, prevention of embankment erosion, preventing water pollution, water resources development and all round management of water resources.

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Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses NWRC coord meeting

FROM PAGE-3

After forming of the NWRC, it observed World Water Day on 22 March every year with the participation of relevant ministries and organizations, local and international NGOs (Non-Government Organisations). The opening ceremony of 2019 World Water Day, talks and exhibition related to water will be held in Nay Pyi Taw on the first week of March. The theme of this year World Water Day is "Leaving No One Behind." All ministries, departments and organizations related to water are urged to participate in the holding of the 2019 World Water Day as they have all done in the past years.

NWRC and water related ministries and departments are cooperating on projects and studies on water sector development with countries including Netherlands, Australia, Japan, China, Korea, Norway and France and international organizations. It is also conducting regional cooperation by cooperating with ASEAN, Mekong River Commission and

Lancang-Mekong Cooperation. Ministries and departments are also cooperating and coordinating with international organizations on water related data/information collection, studies, conducting project works and support implementation works with more complete data/information.

Committee members are urged and required to actively discuss and suggest on matters relating to water related works conducted by ministries and departments connected to the committee, cooperation with international organizations, requirement of coordination with other ministries and departments and suggestions made. Data/information on water is required to be systematically shared among ministries and departments. Relevant ministries and departments are urged to continue to strive toward successful establishment and implementation of all round water resources management system that is beneficial to the people and the country said the Vice President.

Next, committee Vice

Chairman Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung explained about possibility of water scarcity, requirement for preparation works, preventing water pollution and waste disposal into rivers and creeks, maintaining of waterways, establishing a good water law, short and long term work processes to reduce flooding and inundation. Committee Secretary Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems Director-General U Tun Lwin Oo explained about decision made at the coordination meeting 3/2018, implemented and under implementation, development works for Ayeyawady River delta area, water quality measurement works, sharing of water related data/information, water pollution prevention and mitigation works, preparations for World Water Day event, cooperation with international organizations and committee's future works.

Afterwards chairman, secretary and members of NWRC Advisory Group and departmental officials discussed on points to be considered in construct-

ing dams and reservoirs, plans ought to be drawn to mitigate and reduce flooding and inundation, work process to draw up water law, prevention of Golden Apple Snail infestation, work status of advisory group and ministry wise provision of funds for natural disasters.

Following this, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ye Aung, U Ohn Win, U Win Khaing and U Soe Win, Deputy Ministers U Tin Myint and U Soe Aung, state/region ministers, departmental heads and officials discussed about rainwater harvesting; works conducted on collecting groundwater seepage; preliminary works conducted on mitigating effects of climate change, flooding and inundation in Myanmar; state/region wise works on maintaining groundwater seepage sites; management and usage of water resources; electricity generation from hydro-power for local electricity requirement; state/region wise damages and loss from flooding, inundation, bank erosion; works on improving water flow; drawing up a water law; mitigation and prevention works

on flooding, inundation and water scarcity; maintaining of natural environment and water basin areas; ongoing ministry wise works; project aims; international cooperation works and future works of the committee.

The meeting came to a close after Vice President U Henry Van Thio delivered a concluding speech. In his concluding speech the Vice President thanked all on behalf of the committee for the notable matters discussed, to work on the matters discussed in the day's meeting, of being honored for the depiction of a picture of Inle Lake as the logo for World Water Day and urged for continuing the collective cooperation works on implementing and conducting future water related works.

The meeting was attended by NWRC members, union level organization members, state/region government members, ministers, heads of departments, advisory group chairman and members, technicians and officials.—MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint receives Forever Group CEO



Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint discusses television programs with the delegation from Forever Group at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION MINISTER for Information Dr. Pe Myint received Forever Group CEO U Win Maw and party at Ministry of Information meeting hall yesterday morning.

At the meeting, matters relating to television programs, series, music programs, sports programs and documentaries

that are broadcast jointly by Forever Group and Canal +, status of discussion with relevant ministry and telecom operators on drawing up a mobile application for viewing via telephone in addition to audio/video broadcasts, Canal + to increase investment in audio/video broadcast media, opening

a training school in September to develop Myanmar audio/video broadcasting and motion picture sector, current challenges these two sectors are facing and future works were discussed.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun and officials.—MNA
(Translated by Zaw Min)

Union Minister for International Cooperation accepts credentials of UNFPA Representative

THE Union Minister for International Cooperation, U Kyaw Tin received Mr. Ramanathan Balakrishnan, the newly-appointed UNFPA Representative for Myanmar at 10:00 am on 3 January 2019 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, the UNFPA Representative Mr. Ramanathan Balakrishnan presented his credentials to the Union Minister.

After the presentation of credentials, they exchanged views on further strengthening

of cooperation between Myanmar and the UNFPA focusing on the areas of sexual and reproductive health, gender equality and women's empowerment, and prevention of violence against women.

They also discussed matters related to the continued provision of technical and financial assistance to Myanmar's planned census activities and the signing of the Letter of Agreement on the UNFPA's 4th Country Programme (2018-2022) for Myanmar.—MNA



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin receives UNFPA Representative for Myanmar, Mr. Ramanathan Balakrishnan. **PHOTO: MNA**

Value of trade on YSX drops in 2018

THE value of share trading on the Yangon Stock Exchange in 2018 declined to K11.5 billion from K22 billion in 2017, according to data from the YSX. While five-listed companies traded 2.3 million shares in 2018, four-listed companies traded 2.6 million shares in 2017.

In 2016, three-listed companies traded over 2.5 million shares estimated at K70 billion, according to the annual report of the YSX. While trading volume increased in 2017, the value of trade registered a decline compared with the previous year.

In 2018, the stock trading value touched a high of K1.5 billion in August, and reached an all-time low of K666 million in June.

In 2016, only three compa-



A visitor looks at the electronic board showing the stock exchange rate at Yangon Stock Exchange. PHOTO: PHOEH KWAR

nies — the First Myanmar Investment (FMI), the Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), and the Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB) — traded shares on the

YSX.

Although one more public company, the First Private Bank (FPB), entered the YSX market in 2017, stock prices registered

a decline. In 2018, the TMH Telecom Public Co. Ltd. joined the YSX.

The price of a single share of FMI fell from K12,500 on 2 January, 2018, to K10,000 on 28 December, 2018. The share price of MTSH declined from K3,000 to K2,950.

The price of MCB shares also dropped from K8,200 on 3 January, 2018, to K7,400 on 28 December, 2018. While the TMH debuted at K3,250 on the YSX, its share price fell to K2,850 on 28 December, 2018.

In 2018, the YSX doubled stock trade matching times from two to four a day. The exchange also held a promotional event for investors to attract new investors and encourage existing investors to increase trade. The

financial review and future prospects of companies listed on the exchange were discussed at the event.

“Myanmar’s capital market infrastructure is still lagging. Only 15 per cent of the 36,000 securities accounts are active. Stock trading was on the low side in 2018. In order for the stock market to grow, government support is of vital importance. With the support of the government, more public companies will be enticed to participate in the stock market and more institutional investors such as financing companies, investment banks, and insurance companies will emerge,” said U Thet Htun Oo, senior executive manager of the YSX. —Htet Myat ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Watermelon body asks Commerce Ministry to re-open Kyin San Kyawt gate

By Aye Yamone

THE Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association has asked the Commerce Ministry to re-open the Kyin San Kyawt gate amid their concern over traffic congestion at the gate on account of tightened security by China.

Trucks loaded with watermelon, muskmelons, and plums from Myanmar have faced delays after entering the Kyin San Kyawt gate to go to Wanding, China, on account of Chinese border authorities using advanced security measures involving fingerprinting and facial recognition.

On 26 December, 494 trucks were lined up on the Kyin San Kyawt road near Muse. On 27 December, Myanmar shut down the Kyin San Kyawt checkpoint as part of security measures after an armed group attacked the People’s Militia Forces (PMF).

As a result, the trucks had to move to Kyukok-Pansai and were allowed to enter Wanding only on 29 December.

“The Kyukok-Pansai gate is not legal, but it has been opened temporarily. Losses of traders and suppliers are mounting. A truck carrying watermelons can earn 220 Yuan from two rounds. But, if only 3 or 4 tons of fruit of the total 17 tons remain in good condition on account of delays, we cannot even cover truck fees, leave alone make a profit,” said U Naing Win, the chair of the Myanmar Watermelon and Musk-



Trucks loaded with watermelons face delays to proceed with the sale. PHOTO: HAN HTAY

melon Producers and Exporters Association.

Previously, traders were allowed to pass through the Kyukok-Pansai gate to Wanding with an entry stamp on the border pass. But with China upgrading security measures, the entry of fruit trucks has been hindered, resulting in long queues. Over 700 trucks have been spending hours queueing up to pass the gate since 31 December, 2018.

The changes in security protocols at the Sino-Myanmar border coupled with traffic congestion have caused losses to traders and suppliers as fruits have a short shelf life, and any delay can impact their quality. Therefore,

exporters have asked the government to re-open the Kyin San Kyawt gate at the soonest.

“We have submitted a request to the Ministry of Commerce. The Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association has sought discussions with the Commerce Ministry for legal or temporary access to the Kyin San Kyawt gate. If it can be temporarily opened, watermelon growers will be saved. If the gate keeps closing down, the whole supply chain will be at risk,” said U Naing Win.

“Before the closure of Kyin San Kyawt gate, Chinese security measures were causing delays in

border crossing, thereby the entry of fruit trucks to China dropping by half compared to normal days. The Ministry of Commerce was negotiating with China on the matter. They requested us to understand their security protocols,” said U Yan Naing Tun, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Commerce.

The Ministry of Commerce then asked China to increase the gate opening time to tackle the delay faced by fruit trucks, and China agreed. But, during that period, Myanmar had to shut the Kyin San Kyawt gate for security reasons. Following the closure of the gate on 27 December, the Trade Department opened nego-

tiations with the border authorities.

“It is the fruit season so trucks are flowing in and out of the Sino-Myanmar border. But, hundreds of trucks are stranded on the road. We are negotiating with the Chinese embassy in Myanmar. We will apprise the fruit association of what happened, what we are doing, and what we will do. We are conducting discussions with the concerned Myanmar ministries and authorities,” said U Yan Naing Tun, the permanent secretary.

Earlier, China allowed traders to enter Wanding through the Kyukok-Pansai gate from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. After negotiations to tackle the traffic congestion, China is now allowing trucks to enter till 8 p.m. and fruit trucks to come back through the gate not later than 11 p.m.

“The recent delay from the closure of the gate and traffic congestion has caused financial losses to them. As the trucks are stranded on the road, some fruits have been damaged. This is the current situation of the fruit export market in the border areas. Growers will keep planting the fruits, if the market recovers under the management of the related departments. This being so, the acreage of fruit plantations may not decrease. The demand is good, but the traffic and the delays are hurting growers,” said U Soe Lwin, a watermelon grower from Sagaing Region.

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Winners of titles and medals announced

THE president's office has issued eight notifications to mark the 71st anniversary Independence Day. Under the Notification 1/2019, religious titles are conferred upon senior Buddhist monks who are performing the duties of Buddhist religion – pariyatti (lecturing of Buddha's sermons) and patipatti (meditation) as well as upon the lay disciples who are supporting the Buddhist religion by donating alms and offertories. Honorary titles and medals are awarded under Notification 2/2019 whereas Notification 3/2019 is concerned with conferring of Thingaha medal for Myanmar military service, 4/2019, good military service medal, 5/2019, good civil service medal, 6/2019, good police service medal, 7/2019, state police service medal and 8/2019, public service medal and law and order enforcement medal respectively. — MNA ■

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Win Myint

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Win Myint, on the occasion of the 71st Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Donald J. Trump
President of the United States of America
Dear Mr. President,

As you and the people of Myanmar commemorate the 71st anniversary of Myanmar's independence on January 4, please accept the warmest wishes of the American people.

The United States remains committed to the partnership between our two countries and to supporting Myanmar in building a peaceful, prosperous, and democratic society enjoyed by all its diverse peoples.

From Vladimir Putin
President of Russia
Moscow, Kremlin
Dear Mr. President,

Please accept my sincere congratulations on the occasion of Independence Day – National Day of your country.

I note with satisfaction friendly nature of Russia-Myanmar relations. I am confident that they will be further developed in different fields for the benefit of the peoples of our countries, in the interests of strengthening stability and security in Asia-Pacific Region.

I wish You good health and new success and all citizens of Myanmar – peace and well-being.

From Xi Jinping
President of the People's Republic of China
Your Excellency,

On the occasion of the 71st anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people and in my own name, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to you, and through you, to the government and people of Myanmar.

Over the past year, under the leadership of Your Excellency and the Myanmar government, your country has made important achievements in developing the economy, improving people's livelihood, advancing the peace process and promoting foreign exchanges. As a friendly neighbor and Pauk-Phaw brother, China congratulates on Myanmar's achievements. I am pleased to see that China-Myanmar relations are deepening, and our cooperation in various fields continues to make new progress. I attach great importance to the development of China-Myanmar relations and wish to work with you to promote China-Myanmar Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership to a new height and bring greater benefits to the two countries and the two peoples.

May the Republic of the Union of Myanmar enjoy prosperity and its people happiness. May Your Excellency enjoy good health and all the success.

From Moon Jae-in
President of the Republic of Korea
Excellency,

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to convey my

warmest congratulations to Your Excellency and to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Over the years, our two countries have steadily developed friendly relations by working together in a variety of fields. I look forward to further deepening and strengthening the close relations between our two countries in a mutually beneficial and future-oriented manner. I'm also convinced that the friendship between the people of our two countries will be further strengthened in the process.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes for your good health and continued success in all your endeavors as well as for the everlasting prosperity of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From the British Embassy in Yangon

Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and has the honour to convey the following message of felicitations from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II to the people of Myanmar on the occasion of Independence Day on 4 January, 2019.

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

Her Britannic Majesty's Embassy avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the assurance of its highest consideration.

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Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to State Counsellor

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, on the occasion of the 71st Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Mr. Moon Jae-in
President of the Republic of Korea
Excellency,

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to convey my warmest congratulations to Your Excellency and to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Over the years, our two countries have steadily developed friendly relations by working together in a variety of fields. I look forward to further deepening and strengthening the close relations between our two countries in a mutually beneficial and further-oriented manner. I'm also convinced that the friendship between the people of our two countries will be further strengthened in the process. In particular, I look forward to meeting Your Excellency in 2019, when the ROK-ASEAN Commemorative Summit and the ROK-Mekong Summit will be held in the Republic of Korea.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes for your good health and continued success in all your

endeavors as well as for the everlasting prosperity of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Mr. Shinzo Abe
Prime Minister of Japan
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 71st anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to extend my warmest congratulations to Your Excellency on behalf of the Government and people of Japan.

It was significant that Your Excellency visited Japan to attend the 10th Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting last October and we were able to frankly exchange our views for enhancing Mekong-Japan cooperation and deepening friendship and cooperation between Japan and Myanmar. Japan is determined to continue to provide full-fledged support by bringing together its public and private sectors for Myanmar's efforts for democratic nation-building led by Your Excellency.

Along with my wishes for your good health and people's great prosperity, please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Lee Hsien Loong
Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore
Dear State Counsellor,

Please accept my warmest congratulations on the occasion of Myanmar's 71st Independence Day!

Singapore and Myanmar share a warm and long-standing friendship. We enjoy excellent cooperation in many areas including trade, finance, education, culture, and tourism. I look forward to concluding negotiations on our Bilateral Investment Treaty and an updated Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement, which will further boost bilateral economic cooperation. I also thank Myanmar for its strong support for Singapore's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2018.

I wish you good health and success in all your endeavours.

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Win Myint

FROM PAGE-6

From H.E. Shri Ram Nath Kovind
President of the Republic of India
Excellency,

On behalf of the Government, the people of India and on my own behalf, I extend warm greetings and felicitations to Your Excellency, the Government and the friendly people of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of your Independence Day.

I fondly recall my visit to your beautiful country in December 2018, during which we jointly agreed to an agenda to deepen our bilateral cooperation and bolster the connections between our two peoples.

India and Myanmar are tied together by the bonds of culture, religion, language and ethnicity. These, in turn, have enabled us to expand our economic and commercial cooperation. I am confident that we will continue to consolidate this partnership in the coming years.

I convey my best wishes for Your Excellency's good health and well-being, as well as for the continued progress and prosperity of the friendly people of the Union of Myanmar.

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

From Mr. Shinzo Abe
Prime Minister of Japan
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 71st anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to extend to Your Excellency my warmest congratulations on behalf of the Government and people of Japan.

It is my great pleasure that the exchange and cooperation between Japan and Myanmar have been further expanding in various fields including politics, economy and culture.

Japan will continue to contribute to the democratic nation-building of Myanmar and will promote friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Along with my wishes for Your Excellency's good health and the further prosperity of Myanmar people, please accept, Your Excellency, my highest consideration.

From Madam Halimah Yacob
President of the Republic of Singapore

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the people of Singapore, I offer my warmest congratulations on the joyous occasion of Myanmar's 71st Independence Day.

Singapore and Myanmar enjoy excellent relations underpinned by strong people-to-people ties and robust technical cooperation in many areas. We appreciate Myanmar's steadfast support for Singapore's ASEAN Chairmanship in the past year. I am confident we will continue to work closely together to enhance our multi-faceted bilateral relations, and to deepen our cooperation in ASEAN for the mutual benefit of our peoples.

Please accept my best wishes for you and Daw Cho Cho's good health and happiness, as well as for peace and prosperity to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Dr. Arif Alvi
President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Excellency,

It gives me immense pleasure to convey heartiest felicitations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of Myanmar.

Pakistan and Myanmar enjoy cooperative and cordial relations. I am confident that the existing bilateral relations will be further strengthened in the years ahead.

I avail this opportunity to convey my best wishes for Your Excellency's good health and happiness; and for the continued security and prosperity of all citizens of Myanmar.

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

From Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa
Pretoria
Republic of South Africa
Your Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the celebration of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 4 January 2019, the Government and people of the Republic of South Africa join me in conveying to Your Excellency, the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, warmest greetings and sincere congratulations.

May I take this opportunity to express the wish for Your Excellency's good health and also reaffirm our

desire to further enhance and consolidate the excellent bond of friendship that exists between our countries.

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

From Majesty Mohammed VI
King of Morocco
Excellency,

As the Republic of the Union of Myanmar celebrates Independence Day, it gives me great pleasure to send you my sincere congratulations and to wish your people further progress and prosperity.

I should like to say how keen we are in the Kingdom of Morocco to strengthen our cooperation with your country, serve our people's shared interests and enhance coexistence and understanding between different cultures and civilizations.

From Mr. Sergio Mattarella
President of the Italian Republic

On the joyful occasion of the National Day I wish to convey to You, on behalf of the Italian people and on my personal behalf, heartfelt wishes of well-being for the Union of Myanmar.

While hoping that the friendly relations between our Countries will always find new occasions to deepen, both at the bilateral and international level and in the respective regional fora, I renew to You and to all the inhabitants of Myanmar my most heartfelt wishes of harmony and prosperity.

From Norodom Sihamoni
King of Cambodia
Mr. President,

On the auspicious occasion of the 71st Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to convey to Your Excellency and through you, to the people of Myanmar, my warmest congratulations.

Our two peoples enjoy close bilateral relations and the Kingdom of Cambodia remains committed to develop this relationship to further peace, security and sustainable development, in our two countries and in the region.

I wish Your Excellency every success in guiding the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in the path of continued progress and prosperity.

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Ambassador of Nepal to Myanmar

CHAIRMAN of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann received Ambassador of Nepal to Myanmar Mr. Bhim K. Udas at Hluttaw Affairs Building I-11 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they cordially and openly exchanged views on matters pertaining

to the legal affairs, bilateral relations and cooperation. —MNA ■

(Translated by
Win Ko Ko Aung)

Thura U Shwe Mann, and
Nepal Ambassador Mr. Bhim
K. Udas meet in Nay Pyi Taw.
PHOTO: MNA



Safeguarding & preserving independence

INDEPENDENCE Day is upon us again. It has been 71 years since the Republic of the Union of Myanmar achieved independence. At present, ethnic nationals living in the Union of Myanmar are enjoying democratic opportunities and freedom, which are the products of independence.

The freedom we enjoy living and working in the country is thanks, in part, to the democratic system implemented in the country and due to our nation being a sovereign state. We were able to set up a democratic system because we succeeded in achieving the fruits of independence. But we must not cease our vigilance. We must take lessons from our history, assess the country's geopolitics, and contemplate on issues and events at the international level. This way, we can preserve our independence and sovereignty.

Compared with regional neighbors, Myanmar has reached a different situation on her own capabilities, and so, we must be more trusting, respecting, and united as a nation. During the struggle for independence, our national leaders asked us to create our own destiny. The citizens of modern Myanmar can be seen charting their own destiny for the good of the country.

Myanmar is geographically located between two powerful countries and plays a crucial role as a bridge between Southeast Asian and South Asian countries. Myanmar is also unique in terms of religion, culture, and traditions from other countries. And yet, we were able to win our independence without forfeiting our unity. We were able to establish a nation based on the unity of our brothers and sisters from over a hundred

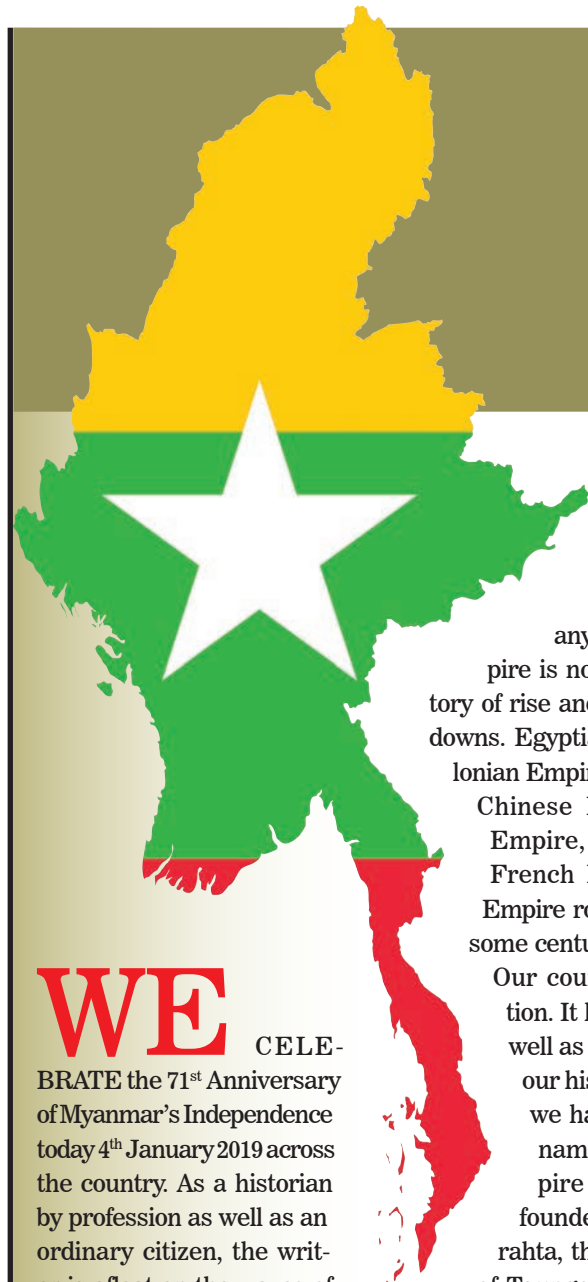
ethnicities.

We gave precedence to unity in our struggle for independence. But once we attained independence, differing beliefs and ideologies led the way to civil unrest, the effects of which can still be felt today. Every citizen of the country must know and understand our history—from the time before we gained independence, when we struggled for it and achieved it, to the present situation in the country and its standing in the international community. We must make sure we do not lose sight of the objectives of an independent nation.

We must study the positive and negative aspects of our history and work towards a better future by treading on the right path. We must cast away our mistrust and suspicions and work together to ensure the path our country takes going forward is a good one. This is how we can safeguard and preserve our independence and sovereignty.

We all are well-versed with the history behind our Independence Day, and we need to contemplate on past events and incorporate the results of our reflections into our conduct in the modern age. By doing so, we would be able safeguard our independence and sovereignty successfully for generations to come.

We must study the positive and negative aspects of our history and work towards a better future by treading on the right path.



WE CELEBRATE the 71st Anniversary of Myanmar's Independence today 4th January 2019 across the country. As a historian by profession as well as an ordinary citizen, the writer is afloat on the waves of stray thoughts. Does history repeat itself? Does history teach lessons? In the school and college days, most history teachers and professors taught that "History repeats itself" by drawing parallels in both world history and Myanmar history.

1. The Rise and Fall of Roman Empire by Polybius
2. History of the British Commonwealth of Nations by Ramsay Muir
3. A study of History) 22 Vols Arnold Toynbee
4. A History of South-East Asia, D.G.E. Hall
5. Stricken Peacock by Dr. Htin Aung
6. ဦးကုလား မဟာရာဇဝင်တော်ကြီး
7. တွင်းသင်းတိုက်ဝင် ရာဇဝင်သစ်
8. မှန်နန်းရာဇဝင်တော်ကြီး
9. ကုန်းဘန်ဆက် ရာဇဝင်တော်ကြီး
10. မြန်မာ့ဂုဏ်ရည် ဦးဖိုးကျား
11. ခေတ်မီမြန်မာရာဇဝင်အကျဉ်း ဦးဖိုးကျား

Pointing out that "that is the Law of Life or the Law of Nature". The impermanence of life or the ever changing of Nature. In Buddhism that change is termed Lokadan Taya လောကဝိတရာ: the ups and downs of life in English. History of mankind is full of ups

Stray thoughts on the 71st Anniversary of Independence Day

By Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja, Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

and downs. History of any country, any kingdom, any empire is nothing but the history of rise and fall, the ups and downs. Egyptian Empire, Babylonian Empire, Indian Empire, Chinese Empire, Persian Empire, British Empire, French Empire, Russian Empire rose and stayed for some centuries and then fell. Our country is no exception. It had its heydays as well as bad days. Viewing our history in a nut-shell we have three empires namely the First Empire of Bagan Period founded by King Anawrahta, the Second Empire of Taungoo Period founded by King Bayint Naung and the Third Empire of Konboun Period founded by King Alaung Paya. Our history teachers not only teach us how these empires were founded but also why these empires broke up and fell. They often make comparison between Myanmar history and world history pointing out how these empires rose and also why they declined. These 'hows' and 'whys' are the essence of learning history.

Next history teachers point out causes and effects of history by analyzing causes into mediate and immediate causes, internal causes and external causes, funda-

mental and circumstantial causes. Similarly efforts are analysed. But they emphasized that some historical effects are very far reaching. It takes generations to get rid of them. This cycle of history, like the cycle of human life goes on forever. No one, no God, no Buddha can stop it.

It is only we who must make the most good out of this cycle of changes. We are the arbiter of our own destiny. Here comes up the

Leaders, government and ethnic peoples have to work together in overcoming the challenges and reaching the goal of national unity.

question. How should we make the most good out of this cycle of changes? Very difficult to give answer to this 'how' question.

Medical doctor can give pills to cure diseases and treatments to heal pain. Engineers can maintain, preserve, renovate old buildings and create and invent new structures. Technicians can find new technology. But historians are limited in their ability and capaci-

ties to rebuild, recover or recreate the glory and greatness of their country. The least they can do is to draw or take lesson from history and apply them wisely to build the country again.

Time is an infinite sequence, and past, present and future are marked by humans. In its continuous sequence, several unforeseen circumstances are likely to creep in resulting many implications for those who are utilizing historical lessons for the good of the life or their country.

Since regaining of our independence on 4th January 1948, all Myanmar ethnic peoples and successive leaders and governments have been trying their best to rebuild their country. But seven decades and one year have elapsed, yet we haven't accomplished our task.

Today we all face the big question. It is the 'why' question. Why have we not accomplished our task of rebuilding our country, our nation? It is no use, putting blame on British Colonialism, Japanese war time fascism, leaders both military and civil, successive governments including incumbent one, hostile or unfriendly foreign countries near or far.

The real answer to this 'Why' question is in ourselves. To become aware of your own weakness is the task easier said than done.

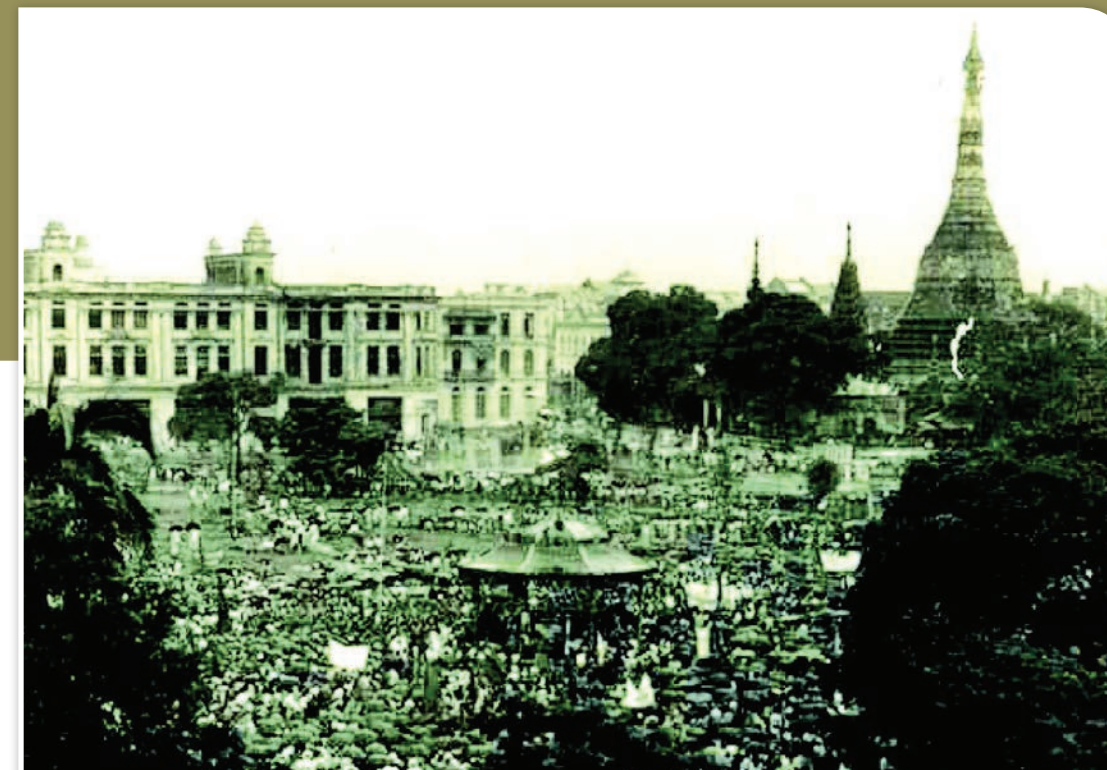
Unity is strength without unity

nothing can be achieved. Without unity of body and soul no living creature can survive. We have been working hard for national unity which is not yet within our reach. The three Empires of our past history mentioned earlier in this article were built on unity. The primary task of the empire builder Kings was national unification, political consolidation without which no peace, no prosperity and no progress. This is truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth.

Therefore regardless of different views, different opinions, different aims and objectives we are bound to make national unity as our one and the only one to achieve.

Though it is encouraging that our endeavours of both the incumbent government, leaders of all ethnic peoples are hard upon achieving national unity, unforeseen challenges are always emerging. But without having our task for the goal of national unity achieved we should never lose our heart in meeting these challenges unitedly.

Life is not a plain sailing. We regained our Independence after decades of struggles and selfless efforts of our leaders and ethnic peoples. In the same vein, leaders, government and ethnic peoples have to work together in overcoming the challenges and reaching the goal of national unity.

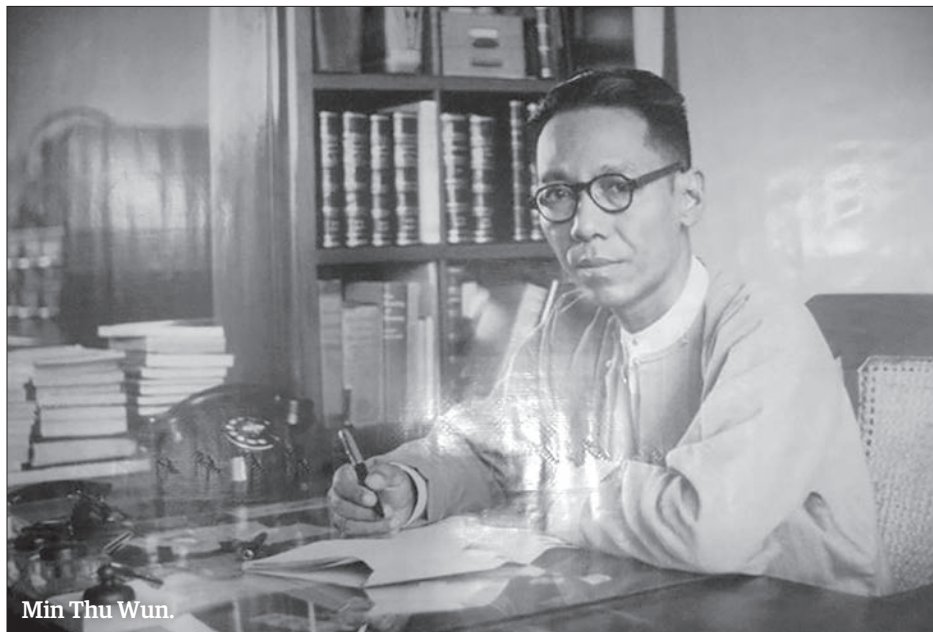


People gather at Fytche Square (now, Maha Bandoola Park) in Yangon to show their strength for independence.



The Poem “Thabye Nyo” Inaugurating the Independence of Myanmar

By Myint Swe Oo



Min Thu Wun.



The Union Jack is lowered on 4th January 1948 and Myanmar become an independent republic, named the Union of Burma.

AFTER obtaining B.A degree in 1933, Sayagyi Min Thu Wun entered service as a part time tutor at the Department of Oriental Studies of Rangoon University. The university students were already politically alert, then. Sayagyi believed that these youths would be the future architects of Myanmar’s independence because he had learned their ardour for the Independence from his personal contacts with these students, as well as from the literary talks and the articles and novels.

Colleges were not closed on the National Day that fell on 10th waning day of Tazaungmon, but on that day, instead of attending classes, the students marched towards the ceremony of the National Day.

It was quite a challenge to celebrate such an occasion in groups while the country lay under the British colony.

Auspicious Greetings

“Eeeiu!” in the air
Young Peacock’s chantings
From the somber grey Hill_
The Song of Victory.
Celebrating the Victory
For the cause of the
prosperous nation.
Time for striking the
Auspicious Drum
The Song of Auspicious
Greetings.

“... he could picture in his mind that the Myanmar people stood united, striving selflessly and unanimously for the independence.”

Auspicious Greetings

On the National Day that fell on 30 November, 1934, all the colleges were closed. Sayagyi Min Thu Wun and his fellow students went to the south west passageway of the Shwedagon and attended the National Day celebration, bowing to the National Flag in unison. Pamphlets of Greetings, published by the Youths Kyee Pwa Ye Association, were exchanged among the students on that day. It was a postcard size, on one side showing some ladies bowing to the Peacock Emblem Flag, and on the other size bearing a short poem, composed in the traditional Laysit style, which was composed by Min Thu Wun at the request of Kyee Pwa ye U Thein. The title of the poem is “Auspicious Greetings”. The phrase “the somber grey Hill” implies “The Singuttara Hill”. The south west slope of the Shwedagon was a part of the hill where the Goyya soldiers of the British army were camped, known as the Goyya Hill. But later, because of the the lack of political stability, the

troop moved out. The National Day celebration usually took place there at the spacious site. It was said that the sight of the students bowing to the National Flag stirred the hearts of the beholders.

Sayagyi Min Thu Wun won a scholarship in September 1936, and studied Sanskrit, Pali and Tibetan studies at Oxford University, England.

Frozen Climate

A small village named Beckford is located near Chester, England. The Priest A.H. Valenko of Beckford was Saya Min Thu Wun’s former teacher: he was the headmaster of Saya Hmat’s School in Yangon. On their meeting in the Oxford University, the priest gave suggestions to the Myanmar scholar. During the Christmas, which was the time for college vacation, it was a frozen season, so it was not fit for an outing. So Min Thu Wun was advised to come and study at the St. Deiniol Library. So during 1936 Christmas, Saya Min Thu Wun went and studied at the Library. When the Christmas came in 1937, he went to St Deiniol Library and spent time reading there. However, on this visit, he was accompanied by the late U Ohn Maung (one of the martyrs of Myanmar).

Of Being One Mind

Saya Min Thu Wun felt the repercussions of 1300 Myanmar political movement. After Christmas, the new year 1938 was ushered in, and on 4 January, Saya Min Thu Wun wrote the poem Thabye Nyo, and sent it to a magazine in Myanmar. The poem appeared in print in No. 1, Vol. 7, O-Way Magazine (1938).

Thabye Nyo (The Reddish Brown Eugenia Sprigs)

Reddish brown Eugenia sprigs
In her hair and in my hair
So fresh the Eugenia sprigs,
Flowers of Shwebo,
That our damsels of Myanmar
kindly hand to us.
Never give up your hopes,
For soon the sweet breeze blows
from the Golden Tower.
As the morning cocks crow,
Merrily, we will march on the open
air ground,
Expecting the sound of the Royal
Drum,
The Drum of Victory
That will be struck at daybreak.
Yes, with Eugenia sprigs,
the Flowers of Shwebo,
Merrily we will march together.

Saya Min Thu Wun wrote this poem because he could picture in his mind that the Myanmar people stood united, striving selflessly and unanimously for the independence. Taking for granted that the Independence was on the way, as he said, he had written this poem.

Saya Min Thu Wun also said that his poem “Thabye Nyo,” being an echo to the poem “Auspicious Greetings”, could be considered as a sequel to the latter.

It happened, quite a coincidence, that, on 4th January 1948, exactly ten years after Thabye Nyo had been written, Myanmar regained her independence.

(Translated by Zaw Tun)

Thura U Shwe Mann attends Independence Day commemoration activities in Pyu



Chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann and officials cut ribbon to hold activities for sports, fun fairs and photography show to mark 71st Anniversary Independence Day in Pyu Township, Bago Region yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

IN commemoration of the 71st Anniversary Independence Day, activities for sports, fun fairs and photography exhibitions were held on the sports ground in Pyu Township, Toungoo District, Bago Region yesterday morning.

Chairman of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann, Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein, Director General of Sports and Physical Education Department U Myo Hlaing, other officials, 27th SEA Games gold medalist Ma Nwe Ni Aung and an International Mathematics Competition gold medalist Maung Thwe Thwe opened the ceremony by cutting ceremonial ribbons.

In his opening speech at the event, Thura U Shwe Mann expressed his congratulation on the achievement

of upgrading the Town Hall, Sports fields, Stadiums, education and healthcare in Pyu Township. He said that sports are of crucial importance for everybody together with townships and citizens. Moreover sports can enhance the spirits of sportsmanship, discipline and unity.

People who reside in Pyu Township should strive for imposing good discipline and unity and success could be achieved through regular sleeping hours, practice and discipline. In doing so, we should try to promote the development of the country and peace process based on the spirit of sports.

Next Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein clarified on the process of upgrading the sports fields and expressed his thanks. Director General of Sports and Physical

Education Department U Myo Hlaing donated sports equipment worth K 2 million and Pyu Township Administrator U Thein Zaw Oo accepted the donation.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Than Nyunt expressed words of thanks and students demonstrated their sports skills. Bago Region Chief Minister presented gifts to the students who participated in the event.

Following this, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann, Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein, Director General of Sports and Physical Education Department U Myo Hlaing and officials looked around the training programmes and stadium. —MNA(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

Black Peter screening at Film Development Centre

DIRECTOR Milos Forman's coming-of-age film 'Black Peter' will be screening at the Film Development Centre at No. 50, Shwe Taung Kyar Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, from 12 noon to 4 pm on 6 January.

Attendees will watch a dig-

itally restored version of the film first and then engage in a film discussion, led by Director U Theikdi.

Black Peter is a Czech New Wave film from 1964 and won the Golden Leopard Award at the Locarno International

Film Festival in the same year. The movie is the eighth movie screened for film discussions at the Film Development Centre and arranged by the Information and Public Relations Department. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe receives expert teams from Shanghai, Guangzhou

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe received expert teams led by Mr. Shi Ting, Senior architectural engineer from the Shanghai Architectural Design and Research Institute Co., Ltd and Guangzhou Sui Ke Construction Management Co.,Ltd at the ministry's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting with the expert teams, they discussed the matters relating to the blueprint archaeological designs for the construction of the Myanmar National Centre of Disease Control and Medical Training Centre in Nay Pyi Taw, that had been constructed in line with

the requirement of the country and its ministry, signing MoU by high-ranking officials from both countries in order to implement the groundwork and its procedures.

The construction of the Myanmar National Centre of Disease Control and Medical Training Centre (Nay Pyi Taw) was carried out with the help of technical supports from the PRC, and upon completion, the process of disease control and prevention as well as research for healthcare training would be conducted in line with international standard. —MNA (Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)



Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe holds talks with members from Shanghai Architectural Design and Research Institute Co., Ltd and Guangzhou Sui Ke Construction Management Co.,Ltd. **PHOTO: MNA**

Watermelon body asks Commerce Ministry to re-open Kyin San Kyawt gate

FROM PAGE-5

As their inflow has slowed, the fruits are selling well in the Chinese market, said traders. But merchants are worried by the traffic congestion as fruits are perishable goods. If the trucks face further delays in entering China, the fruits they are carrying will decay, they said.

On 2 January, depending on their quality, watermelons and muskmelons were priced at 1,000 to 2,800 yuan, while golden honeydew fetched 2,400-3,700 yuan per ton, according to the Khwarnyo fruit depot.

China accounts for 95 per cent of Myanmar's fruit exports. Watermelon tops the list of fruits exported to China, followed by mango and muskmelon. Myanmar's mangosteens, rambutan, lychee, watermelon, and muskmelon have been cleared for

import by China's food safety inspection mechanism — the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine (AQSIQ).

The volume of watermelon exports was estimated at 500,000 tons in the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year, over 560,000 in the 2015-2016 FY, and over 170,000 tons in the mini-budget period from April to September. The volume of muskmelon exports was registered at over 110,000 tons in the 2014-2015 FY, over 100,000 tons in the 2015-2016 FY, and over 40,000 tons in the mini-budget period.

Watermelons and muskmelons are primarily grown in the Mandalay and Sagaing regions and Shan State. Myanmar's watermelons and muskmelons enjoy a large share of the Chinese market. ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

DEPUTY CHIEF EDITORAye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORSZaw Min
Zaw Htet Oo
Win Ko Ko Aung**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com**TRANSLATORS**Khaing Thanda Lwin,
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**May Thet Hnin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com
Nyein Nyein Ei,**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAMTun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Thein Htwe**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01) 8604529,
Fax - (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
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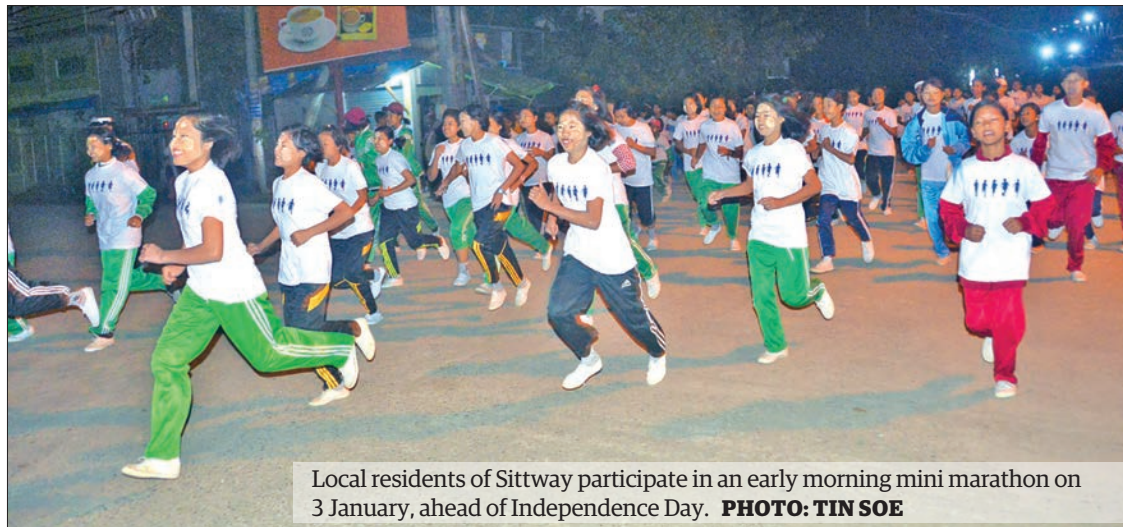
Sittway holds mini marathon to mark Independence Day

A MINI marathon was organized in Sittway Town early in the morning on 3 January to mark the 71st anniversary of the Independence Day. A total of 400 men and 200 women took part in the race.

The mini marathon started at the Seik Yoe Kya Bridge. Participants ran through Sittway town's watch tower, Strand road, and the offices of ministries and finished at the Danyawady sport ground. Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu awarded cash prizes to the winners.

In the men's mini marathon, Maung Than Tun Naing (Minbya) won the first prize of K100,000, Maung Zaw Paing (Na Ta La) took the second prize of K70,000, and Maung Myint Lin (Na Ta La) took the third prize of K50,000.

"I am happy with winning the first prize. When I competed in Minbya Town, I came in second and third," said Maung Than Tun



Local residents of Sittway participate in an early morning mini marathon on 3 January, ahead of Independence Day. PHOTO: TIN SOE

Naing.

In the women's mini marathon, Ma Phyu Phyu Khine (Sittway) came first and was awarded a prize of K100,000, Ma Thuzar Khin (Na Ta La) came second and was awarded K70,000, and Ma Phyo Aye Hlaing (Na Ta La) came third and was given K50,000.

Besides the winners, Chief Minister U Nyi Pu awarded

Ks10,000 each to the top ten participants.

"We had invited all the students of Rakhine State to participate in the mini marathon. A total of 600 people, including 400 men and 200 women, took part in the race. We organized the race to promote fitness and make the public aware of the health benefits of exercise," said U Aung Min, the

deputy director of the Rakhine State Sports and Physical Education Department.

Tug-of-war, Sepak Takraw, chess, and climbing-the-greasy-pole competitions were also held and prizes were awarded to winners to mark the 71st anniversary of the Independence Day.—Maw Si / Ko Min (Translated by Hay Mar)

206 human trafficking cases reported in 2018

A total of 206 cases of human trafficking were reported in 2018, and most of them involved victims entering into forced marriages with Chinese men, according to the anti-trafficking police force.

Between January and December, 2018, the anti-trafficking police force registered 598 offenders in 206 cases involving 317 victims. Of the 317 victims, 25 were children, according to data from the police force.

Of the total cases, 152 involved forced marriages with Chinese men, one case involved forced prostitution, one case involved illegal adoption, four cases involved illegal surrogacy, and six cases involved job exploitation.

The anti-trafficking police force also recorded three cases of labour exploitation in Thailand, three cases of forced marriages in Myanmar, 27 cases of forced prostitution, and nine cases of

job exploitation.

Among the cases investigated by the police, 55 cases were from Yangon Region, 54 from Shan State, and 27 from the Mandalay Region, while the remaining cases were registered in other states and regions, said the anti-trafficking police force.

According to the 2005 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law, people who traffic women and children face a minimum 10-year

imprisonment, or a maximum life imprisonment, or fine. Money or property received through trafficking is confiscated by the government.

The government has also assigned an anti-human trafficking police force unit in the border area. The police force has taken legal action against traffickers under the anti-trafficking law.—Nyein Nyein

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Illegal timber seized in Bago Region

A combined team comprising officials from the Forest Department conducted search operations and seized illegally logged timber weighing 528.7173 tons in December. They also confiscated 13 chainsaw machines and other logging equipment, 6 vehicles, 14 motorbikes, one three-wheel motorbike, and one motor vessel.

The Forest Department is making arrangements to move the items to a safe place.—Hein Htet (Bago)

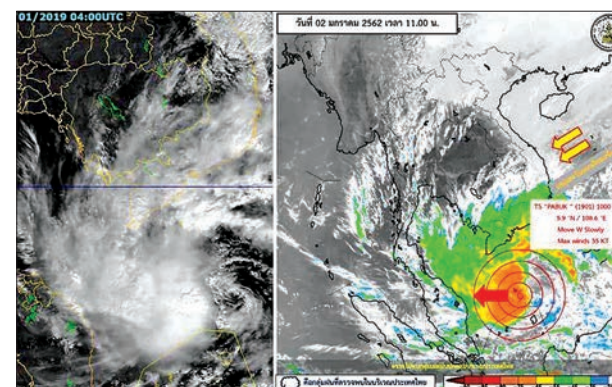
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Myanmar migrant workers in Thai, Kawthoung residents warned of Tropical Storm Pabuk

MYANMAR migrant workers residing in southern cities in Thailand have been warned of Tropical Storm Pabuk by the Myanmar embassy yesterday.

The storm warning said Pabuk was moving east from the South China Sea at a 65 km/hr around 4 pm on 2 January. The storm was passing Indochina and reaching the Gulf of Thailand around 2-3 January. The storm will reach Chumpon and Surat Thani districts in Southern Thailand late on 4 January. Heavy rain is forecasted in those regions from 3 to 5 January and local residents have been warned to take necessary precautions and fishermen are prevented from going out to sea during that period.

Similarly, the Disaster Management Committee of Kawthoung District and its townships have issued warnings of the tropical storm to villages and townships in the districts yesterday.



Their warnings said Tropical Storm Pabuk is forecasted to head towards the sea 295 miles southeast of Nakhon Si Thammarat in Thailand and 400 miles southeast of Kawthoung. The storm will continue inland and will pass close to Nakhon Si Thammarat, located south of Kawthoung, and enter the Andaman Sea. Fishermen have been warned to suspend fishing trips and local people are receiving necessary instructions from authorities.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

Tourists flee Thai islands as Tropical Storm Pabuk looms

BANGKOK (Thailand) — Tens of thousands of tourists have fled the Thai resort islands of Koh Phangan and Koh Tao in a mass exodus ahead of Tropical Storm Pabuk which is set to bring heavy rains, wind and seven-metre (22-foot) waves, officials said on Thursday.



Tourists walk down an all-but abandoned beach on Koh Samui, Thailand as a red flag indicating expected rough weather conditions and warning tourists not to go into the sea. PHOTO: AFP

The islands, hugely popular with holiday-makers especially during the peak Christmas and New Year season, have emptied out since Wednesday as tourists packed onto ferries bound for the southern Thai mainland, with swimming banned and boats set to suspend services.

Pabuk, Thailand's first tropical storm in the area outside of the monsoon season for around 30 years, is poised to batter Koh Phangan and Koh Tao as well as Koh Samui on Friday night, before cutting into the mainland.

No official evacuation order has been given but tourists are leaving in droves.

"I think the islands are almost empty... between 30,000 to 50,000 have left since the New Year's Eve countdown parties," Krikrai Songthanee, Koh

Phangan district chief, told AFP. The acting mayor of Koh Tao, one of Southeast Asia's finest diving spots, said boats to Chumphon on the mainland were crammed with tourists, but several thousand guests were still on the island likely to brave the storm.

Pabuk was packing winds of 104 kilometres per hour (65 mph) but was unlikely to intensify into a full blown typhoon, according to forecasters.

"But we expect waves as high as five or seven metres near the eye of the storm. Normally in the Gulf

of Thailand there are only two metre high waves," Phuwieng Prakammaitara, director general at the Thai Meteorological Department, told reporters.

"It's difficult to predict the severity of the storm so people should comply with authorities' recommendations."

On Koh Samui, the closest of the trio of islands, a Russian man drowned on Wednesday after his family ignored warnings not to go into the sea.

"A family of three went swimming but the strong current caught a 56-year-old man who drowned," Police Captain Boonnam Srinarat of Samui Police told AFP.

"Island officials announced the warning and put up the red 'danger' flags... but maybe the family did not think the situation was that serious."—AFP ■

No casualties reported after 5.3-magnitude quake in Sichuan

CHENGDU — No casualties have been reported after a 5.3-magnitude earthquake jolted Gongxian County, Yibin City in southwest China's Sichuan Province at 8:48 am on Thursday (Beijing Time), according to the local emergency officials.

The epicenter was monitored at 28.20 degrees north latitude and 104.86 degrees east longitude with a depth of 15 km, the China Earthquake Networks Center (CENC) said.

Residents in Gongxian felt strong tremors, and some houses were damaged. —Xinhua ■

Koala drinks from water bottle in Australia heatwave

SYDNEY (Australia) — As Australia swelters in an extreme heatwave, a video of a woman in the state of Victoria pouring water into the mouth of a thirsty koala has melted hearts online.

Numerous towns set new December records, according to the Bureau of Meteorology, while emergency services have been on high alert for bushfires.

Local Chantelle Lowrie was at a camping ground near the Murray River in the southern state of Victoria on Friday when she saw the koala. "It was 44 degrees Celsius — very, very hot day," Lowrie told AFP on Tuesday. "I stopped

because he looked as though he could use a drink of water." Lowrie posted on Facebook footage of herself giving water to the furry marsupial, who drank from the bottle before climbing back up the tree.

The footage is reminiscent of another video of a koala, later nicknamed Sam, who drank from a bottle offered by a firefighter during deadly bushfires in Victoria in 2009.—AFP ■

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(1/2019)**

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

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	IFB-039(18-19)	10" ERW API 5L Grade X-42 MS 3 LPE Coated Steel Line Pipes (32200) MTR	US\$
(b)	IFB-040(18-19)	4" ERW API 5L Grade X-42 MS 3 LPE Coated Steel Line Pipes (16,100) MTR	US\$

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 7 January 2019. 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 4 February 2019**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time – **4-2-2019, 14:00 pm**
Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 – 411206

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO TAI VOY. NO. (117 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO TAI VOY. NO. (117 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 04-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SILKAGO LOGISTICS PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V OCEAN PROBE VOY. NO. (005N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OCEAN PROBE VOY. NO. (005N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 04-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

ကုန်အမှတ်တံဆိပ် တစ်ဦးတည်းပိုင်ဖြစ်ကြောင်း
အသိပေးကြေညာခြင်း

ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊ ရန်ကင်းမြို့နယ်၊ ဘောက်ထော်ပြည်သာယာအိမ်ရာ တိုက်အမှတ် (၄) အခန်း (၂၀) နေ
ဒေါ်အိမ်မိုးမြတ် (၁၂/ရကန(နိုင်)၀၆၃၅၆၀) သည် ဘောက်ထော်ပြည်သာယာအိမ်ရာ တိုက်အမှတ်တံဆိပ်ကို
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မှတ်ပုံတင်သွင်းကြေညာခဲ့ပြီးဖြစ်ပါသည်။

EPU[®]
စာချုပ်အမှတ် - ၁၃၆၄၈/၂၀၁၈

အထက်ဖော်ပြပါ "E'PU အိပ်" ကုန်အမှတ်တံဆိပ်အမည်အမှတ်သားကို အရောင်အမျိုးမျိုး၊
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စားသုံးဆီ၊ Bakery မုန့်လုပ်ငန်း အမျိုးမျိုးထုတ်လုပ်၍ "E'PU" အမှတ်တံဆိပ်ကပ်နှံ၍
ပြည်ထောင်စုသမ္မတ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ တစ်ဝန်းလုံးသို့ ထုတ်လုပ်ဖြန့်ဖြူးရောင်းချသွားမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။
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ထင်ယောင်ထင်မှား၊ ဆင်တူယိုးမှား တူပပြုလုပ်သုံးစွဲခြင်း မပြုလုပ်ရန်နှင့် ပြုလုပ်ကြောင်း
တွေ့ရှိရပါက တည်ဆဲဥပဒေများနှင့်အညီ အရေးယူသွားမည်ဖြစ်ကြောင်း အများသိစေရန်
အသိပေးကြေညာအပ်ပါသည်။

လွှဲအပ်သူကြားချက်အရ
ဒေါ်ခင်နန်းမြတ် (LL.B, D.B.L., D.M.L)
တရားလွှတ်တော်ရှေ့နေ (စဉ်-၁၀၂၃၄)
အမှတ်-၉/၁၁၊ အခန်း(၃၀၆)၊ ၃၆ လမ်း(အောက်)၊ ကျောက်တံတားမြို့နယ်၊
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Jason Momoa is seen arriving, trident in hand, at the 12 December, 2018 Hollywood premiere of "Aquaman," which has topped box offices in its first two weekends. PHOTO: AFP

'Aquaman' stays afloat atop N American box office

LOS ANGELES (United States)—"Aquaman" displayed a powerful kick in North American theaters over the weekend, taking in an estimated \$52.1 million to help close a record year for the movie sector, final figures showed on Wednesday.

With hunky and heavily tattooed Jason Momoa in the lead role, the Warner Bros. film has grossed nearly \$750 million globally. It earned \$52.1 million in its second weekend. Disney's "Mary Poppins Returns" gained altitude in its second weekend, taking in \$28.4 million for the Friday-through-Sunday period. The follow-up to the 1964 movie stars Emily Blunt as the stern but kind-hearted nanny, backed by the amiable Lin-Manuel Miranda of "Hamilton" fame. In third was Paramount's "Bumblebee," a prequel to the "Transformers" movies, starring Hailee Steinfeld and John Cena, at \$20.9 million. *The Washington Post*

credits the film with rising above earlier editions in the franchise to show "humor, emotion and a surprising amount of heart." Fourth place went to Sony's "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse," at \$18.8 million. The film has drawn rave reviews—with a 97 score on the Rotten Tomatoes website—and has netted a Golden Globe nomination as best animated picture. In fifth was "The Mule" from Warner Bros., at \$12.2 million. Clint Eastwood directs and takes the lead role—his last acting part, he has said—as a destitute 90-year-old who turns to transporting cocaine for a drug cartel.

Rounding out the weekend's top 10 were: "Vice" (\$7.8 million) "Holmes & Watson" (\$7.4 million) "Second Act" (\$7.4 million) "Ralph Breaks the Internet" (\$6.7 million) "Dr Seuss's The Grinch" (\$4.1 million) "Mary Queen of Scots" (\$2.7 million)—AFP ■

Young entrepreneur sees rosy future in farming

FUKAYA (Japan)—The life of 25-year-old Ayaka Tanaka is busy, to say the least.

As the head of a fast-growing organic rose producer, Tanaka routinely checks her farms on the outskirts of Tokyo, picks rose petals herself at harvest time and meets prospective clients during her days in the Japanese capital. She does all that while studying economics at university and taking English lessons with an eye on her business' future overseas expansion.

Rose Labo Co, with slightly more than a dozen employees, has been producing edible organic roses at a 3,300-square-metre farm in Fukaya since it was established in Saitama Prefecture, near Tokyo, in 2015. She grows her plants hydroponically, avoiding soil so as not to require chemicals or pesticides.

Her rose petals are used as cake decorations and the company's processed products, such as jams and cosmetics, are sold at major department stores and at other shops in Tokyo, as well as online.

Roses have been a part of Tanaka's life from early childhood, sometimes in the form of designs on plates and cups used at home, other times through the saying, "Roses make a woman strong," repeated by her great-grandmother whose love for the fragrant flower was well known in the family.

But little did she imagine that the quiet but constant presence of roses in her life would transform her, taking her from a passive university student who always avoided challenges because of uncertainty about her abilities and future plans, to a woman with a plan. It was a casual living room conversation with her family when she was a college freshman that led to her life-changing moment.

"My mother said, 'You know, there are roses you can eat,' and it blew my mind," said Tanaka. "I was surprised that I didn't know about edible roses."

The discovery about the flower she thought she knew so well made Tanaka realize she had blindly assumed many things in life, and cast a light on the many unexplored possibilities of roses, and herself, she said.

"I had a sense of inferiority because everyone seemed to have firm dreams and goals that they were pursuing, but when I encountered edible roses, it made me think about their potential and how, maybe, I can achieve things too if I try," she said.

It was not long until she quit her international politics studies at university to work at a rose farm in Osaka and learn about how to grow the flowers.

"As soon as they found out, a family meeting was called," Tanaka said with a laugh, adding that it was all the more

shocking because she was the first in her family to take up farming.

In the rapidly-aging farming industry, Tanaka's move is rare. As of 2017, the farming population in Japan stood at 1.8 million and their average age was 66.7. Of the 55,700 people who joined farming businesses that year, women aged 44 or younger only accounted for 4,600, according to data from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

"Producing cabbage or other products without detailed plans and selling them without knowing where they go is okay in one sense, but you are likely to end with reduced profits and a poorly run business, which the next generation will be reluctant to take over," Tanaka said.

"I want to let many people know of the potential in farming," she said, adding she considers it crucial to add something special to one's products and secure solid sales channels to make a sustainable farming business.

Now, Tanaka holds lectures at various universities to share her experience as a young entrepreneur and farmer and her views on the future of the sector.

Being a young woman without a family history of farming, which she once considered a weakness, has turned out to be a strength that helps her reach

out to different people, she said.

Her business has not always been successful. In the first year she started growing roses none bloomed, she recalled. Out of desperation, she sought help from an agricultural college to relearn techniques and then her rose bushes not only started blooming but producing many more flowers than she needed.

Being reluctant to waste her cherished flowers, Tanaka made them into jam and hatched a plan to process excess rose petals for sale.

Processed rose products, including confitures, teas, soaps and other cosmetic products, have since proved a valuable revenue source that now accounts for about 70 percent of company sales. Her annual sales stood at 1.5 million yen (\$13,000) in the first year but surged to 100 million yen by the third year, according to Tanaka.

Tanaka says this is only the starting point for her business as she looks towards selling her products overseas. She says she has had interest and offers from people in South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan and elsewhere.

"I used to live passively, as if I were just killing time, but now I feel that I am walking on my own two feet...and I am also not just thinking about everyday things but also about the future," she said.—Kyodo News ■



Kim Kardashian and Kanye West. PHOTO: PTI

Kim Kardashian, Kanye West expecting fourth child

LOS ANGELES—Kim Kardashian and Kanye West are set to welcome their fourth child, via surrogate.

People magazine has confirmed the news.

The couple's third child, daughter Chicago turns one this month, was also born through surrogacy.

Citing multiple sources, *Us Weekly* claimed the fourth child is a boy, who is due in "very early May".

Kardashian, 38, has been vocal about expanding her family and her difficulties in past pregnancies.

The couple are also parents to eldest daughter North, five-and-a-half years and son Saint, three.

The reality TV star and West, 41, are yet to comment on the news.—PTI ■

Breathtaking 12 minutes for Chang'e-4's landing

BEIJING—Over about 12 dramatic minutes, China's Chang'e-4 probe descended and softly touched down on a crater on the far side of the moon on Thursday.

Wu Weiren, chief designer of China's lunar exploration programme, said Chang'e-3 landed on the Sinus Iridum, or the Bay of Rainbows, on the moon's near side, which is as flat as the north China plain, while the landing site of Chang'e-4 is as rugged as the high mountains and lofty hills of southwest China's Sichuan Province.

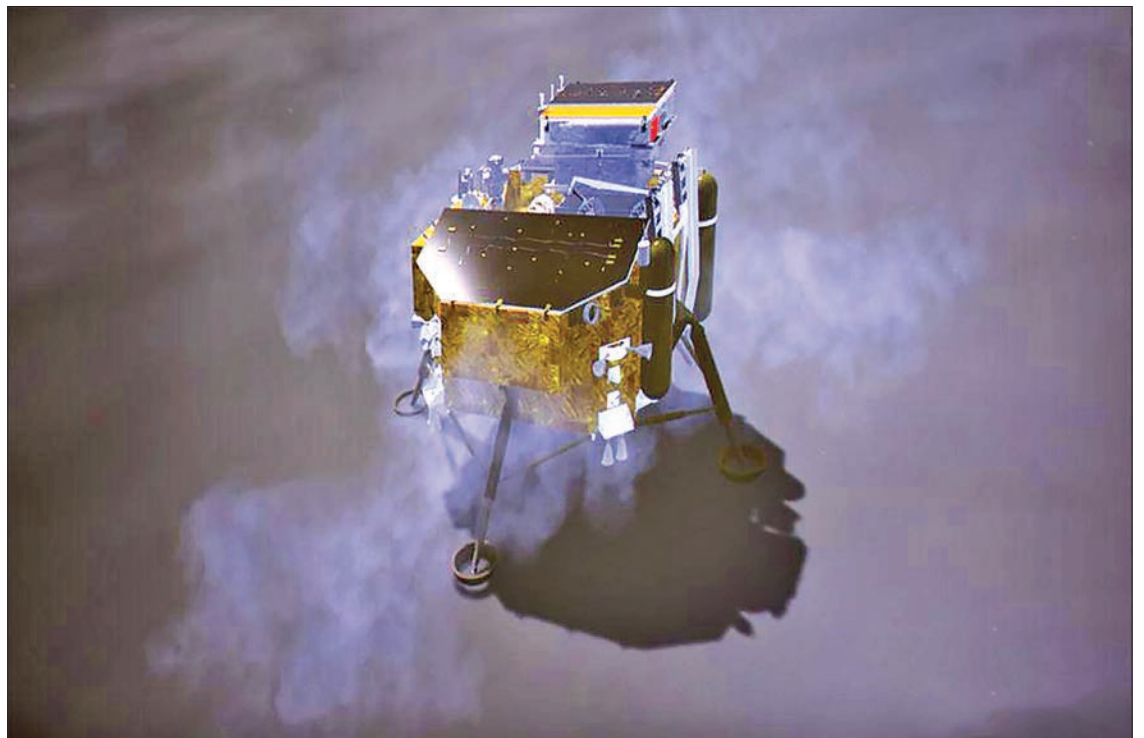
Chinese space experts chose the Von Karman Crater in the South Pole-Aitken Basin as the landing site of Chang'e-4. The area available for the landing is only one eighth of that for Chang'e-3, and is surrounded by

mountains as high as 10 km.

Unlike the parabolic curve of Chang'e-3's descent trajectory, Chang'e-4 made an almost vertical landing, said Wu. "It was a great challenge with the short time, high difficulty and risks," Wu said. The whole process was automatic with no intervention from ground control, but the relay satellite transmitted images of the landing process back to Earth, he said.

"We chose a vertical descent strategy to avoid the influence of the mountains on the flight track," said Zhang He, executive director of the Chang'e-4 probe project, from the China Academy of Space Technology.

Li Fei, one of the designers of the lander, said when the process began, an engine was ignited to



A simulated landing process of Chang'e-4 lunar probe is seen through the monitor at Beijing Aerospace Control Centre in Beijing, capital of China on 3 January, 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA

lower the craft's relative velocity from 1.7 km per second to close to zero, and the probe's attitude was adjusted to face the moon and descend vertically.

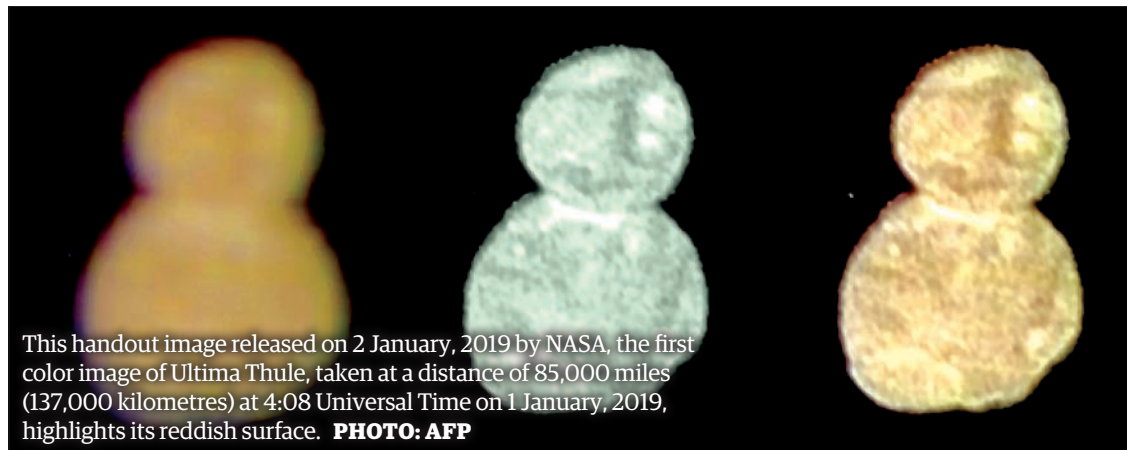
When it descended to an altitude of about 2 km, its cameras took pictures of the lunar sur-

face so the probe could identify large obstacles such as rocks or craters, said Wu Xueying, deputy chief designer of the Chang'e-4 probe.

At 100 metres above the surface, it hovered to identify smaller obstacles and measure the slopes

on the lunar surface, Wu said.

After calculation, the probe found the safest site, and continued its descent. When it was 2 metres above the surface, the engine stopped, and the spacecraft landed with four legs cushioning against the shock.—Xinhua ■



This handout image released on 2 January, 2019 by NASA, the first color image of Ultima Thule, taken at a distance of 85,000 miles (137,000 kilometres) at 4:08 Universal Time on 1 January, 2019, highlights its reddish surface. PHOTO: AFP

NASA says faraway world Ultima Thule shaped like 'snowman'

WASHINGTON (United States)—Four billion miles from the sun floats Ultima Thule, an icy celestial body that NASA scientists announced on Wednesday is aptly shaped like a giant snowman. The first detailed images beamed back from the US agency's New Horizons mission allowed scientists to confidently determine the body was formed when two spheres, or "lobes," slowly gravitated towards each other until they stuck together—a major scientific discovery. The New Horizons spacecraft on Tuesday flew past Ultima Thule, which was discovered via telescope in 2014 and is the farthest and potentially oldest cosmic body ever observed by a spacecraft.

Before that flyby, the only image scientists had was a blurry one showing Ultima Thule's oblong shape, resembling something like

a bowling pin or a peanut.

"That image is so 2018... Meet Ultima Thule!" said lead investigator Alan Stern, doing little to hide his joy as he revealed a new sharper image of the cosmic body, taken at a distance as close as 17,000 miles (about 27,000 kilometers) with a resolution of 140 metres per pixel. "That bowling pin is gone—it's a snowman if anything at all," Stern said during a NASA briefing. "What this spacecraft and this team accomplished is unprecedented." Ultima Thule's surface reflects light about as much as "garden variety dirt," he said, as the sun's rays are 1,600 times fainter there than on Earth.

The body is roughly 19 miles long and completes its own rotation in about 15 hours. NASA dubbed the larger lobe Ultima, and the other, which is about three times smaller, Thule. "This

is the first object that we can clearly tell was born this way" Stern said, instead of evolving as a sort of "bi-lobe." "This really puts the nail on the coffin now. We know that this is how these kinds of objects in many cases form."

'A time machine'

Some 4.5 billion years ago a cloud of frozen pebbles began to join forces, gradually forming two bodies—Ultima and Thule. Slowing turning, they eventually touched at each other at what mission geology manager Jeff Moore called an "extremely slow speed"—maybe just one to a few miles per hour. If such a meeting occurred between two cars in a parking lot, he said, no driver would bother writing it up. The lobes, according to Moore, are really just "resting on each other." —AFP ■

Study finds clues to living a stronger, longer life

CHICAGO—Researchers from the University of Michigan (UM) Life Sciences Institute have uncovered a cause of declining motor function and increased frailty in tiny aging worms, and identified a molecule that can be targeted to improve motor function. As humans and animals age, their motor functions progressively deteriorate. Millimetre-long roundworms called nematodes exhibit aging patterns remarkably similar to those of other animals, and they only live about three weeks, making them an ideal model system for studying aging.

To better understand how the interactions between cells changed as worms aged, the researchers investigated the junctions where motor neurons communicate with muscle tissue. They identified a molecule called SLO-1, namely slowpoke potassium channel family member 1, that acts as a regulator for these communications. The molecule dampens neurons' activity, slowing down the signals from neurons to muscle tissue and reducing motor function. The researchers manipulated SLO-1, first using genetic tools and then using a drug called paxilline. In both cases, they observed two major effects in the roundworms: not only did they maintain better motor function later in life, they

also lived longer than normal roundworms.

"It's not necessarily ideal to have a longer lifespan without improvements in health or strength," said Shawn Xu, a professor of molecular and integrative physiology at the UM Medical School. "But we found that the interventions improved both parameters—these worms are healthier and they live longer."

More surprisingly, the timing of the interventions drastically changed the effects on both motor function and lifespan. When SLO-1 was manipulated early in the worms' life, it had no effect on lifespan and in fact had a detrimental effect on motor function in young worms. But when the activity of SLO-1 was blocked in mid-adulthood, both motor function and lifespan improved.

As the SLO-1 channel is preserved across many species, the researchers hope these findings will encourage others to examine its role in aging in other model organisms. In the next step, the researchers hope to determine the importance of the SLO-1 channel in early development in the worms, and to better understand the mechanisms through which it affects lifespan.

The findings were published on Wednesday in *Science Advances*. —AFP ■

Charity Cup 2019 to be broadcast live on MRTV

CHARITY Cup 2019, the opening football competition by the previous champions of the Myanmar National League, will be broadcast live on MRTV and MySports, according to a statement on the official MNL website yesterday.

MNL defending champion Yangon United will play against runner up Shan United at the Cup. The match, which will take place at the Aung San Stadium in Yangon, will begin at 3.30 p.m. on 6 January.

A coordination meeting for the Cup was held at the meeting hall of the MNL. It was attended by officials from the MNL and the Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

Famous artistes will volunteer for the entertainment programme to be held on the day of the Cup, according to the meeting.

During the charity match, teams will be allowed to substitute five players and use three expatriate players. Yangon

United players will wear white-colored jerseys, while Shan United players will wear red-colored jerseys for the match, according to decisions reached at yesterday's meeting.

Tickets for the match will be priced at Ks2,000 for the grand stand and Ks1,000 for the ordinary stand.

Proceeds from the match will go to orphanages, according to yesterday's meeting.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Myanmar defender Thein Than Win joins Thai club Ratchaburi

THE Thai League 1 club, Ratchaburi Mittr Phol F.C., has signed Myanmar national player Thein Than Win on a one-year contract from Yadanarbon F.C. for the upcoming football season.

Thein Than Win will serve as a left-back on the Ratchaburi team, said a source from the team's website.

The Ratchaburi F.C., nicknamed The Dragons, finished 12th in the 2018 league, avoiding relegation by a solitary point.

Thein Than Win will boost Ratchaburi's defense, said an official from the Thai club.



Myanmar defender Thein Than Win (left) holds the jersey together with an official from the Ratchaburi Mittr Phol F.C. PHOTO: RATCHABURI MITR PHOL FC

With this, Thein Than Win joins Myanmar players Kyaw Ko Ko, Aung Thu, and Zaw Min Tun, who have already signed with Thai clubs for the upcoming season.

Initially, Thein Than Win played for Kanbawza F.C. in the Myanmar National League. On 19 November, 2015, he shifted to Yadanarbon F.C., signing a two-year contract with the team.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

'Fighter' Djokovic into Qatar quarter-finals after scare

DOHA—Novak Djokovic admitted he had to "fight" to come back from a set down to beat world number 36, Hungary's Marton Fucsovics at the Qatar Open.

The world number one survived a huge scare to eventually triumph 4-6, 6-4, 6-1 on Wednesday and admitted his opponent was "very close to the win". "For the first two sets he was the better player," said two-time Qatar Open champion Djokovic. "He played really well, smart, changing up the rhythm and the pace of the ball and moving me around. "I was kind of in a corner and I had to find my way and fight my way through."

The match lasted exactly two hours, which was twice as long as the Serb spent on court in his first round stroll against Damir Dzumhur, where he lost just three games.

A backhand winner eventually secured victory for Djokovic but the result was in doubt for a long time, with the Serb only breaking Fucsovics in the tenth game of the second set to ensure the match went into a final set shootout. Djokovic added: "I knew his qualities and especially in the



Novak Djokovic . PHOTO: PTI

slower conditions, so I did expect that it was going to be a match with a lot of rallies and very physical and that has proven to be the case." The number one seed, will play fifth seed Nikoloz Basilashvili in the quarter-finals. The Georgian beat Russia's Andrey Rublev, the 2018 runner-up, 6-3, 6-4 on Wednesday. If he wins his last eight match, Djokovic is on course to meet Stan Wawrinka in the semi-finals after the Swiss also won on Wednesday, beating Chile's Nicolas Jarry 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

Wawrinka plays Spain's Roberto Batista Agut in the quarters.

Also through is France's Pierre-Hugues Herbert who notched a second thrilling victory in as many nights by beating Germany's Max Marterer 6-3, 6-7 (6/8), 7-6 (8/6). Herbert, who beat second seed and world number eight Dominic Thiem 24 hours earlier, will now play Tomas Berdych in the last eight, who won a three-set match against Fernando Verdasco, 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, in the last match of the night.—PTI ■



Ole Gunnar Solskjaer celebrates victory at Newcastle on Wednesday 2 January. PHOTO: AFP

Never let me go: Solskjaer wants to stay as Man United boss

NEWCASTLE (United Kingdom)—Ole Gunnar Solskjaer joined Matt Busby in the Manchester United record books in his team's 2-0 win at Newcastle on Wednesday and admitted he does not want to leave the club in the summer.

The United interim manager, in charge until the end of the season when he is scheduled to return to his Norwegian club Molde, has now won his first four games in charge.

In United's history, only the legendary and iconic Busby has matched that achievement and Solskjaer celebrated enthusiastically with his club's travelling supporters after goals from Romelu Lukaku and Marcus Rashford secured the win.

"I don't want to (leave)," said Solskjaer when asked about his future beyond this season. "It is such a great bunch of players, a fantastic atmosphere. But it is the next game, the next game and I am doing my job for as long as I am here." United will now move on to much tougher challenges, starting with the Premier League visit to Tottenham a week on Sunday.

But, given the manner of Wednesday's victory, Solskjaer has the look of a manager at the top of his game after his decision to throw on Lukaku and Alexis Sanchez, two of the biggest under-achievers under former manager Jose Mourinho, after 63 minutes.

Instantly, Newcastle keeper Martin Dubravka fumbled a 25-yard Rashford free-kick and Lukaku, with his first touch of the game, tapped the rebound home from five yards.

The game hung in the balance until the 79th minute when Newcastle, pushing upfield for an equaliser, were caught on the counter-attack.

Lukaku found Sanchez whose astute pass reached Rashford in space and the England forward showed great poise to curl the ball past Dubravka. "It was a tough test," said Solskjaer of Rashford's performance.—AFP ■