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4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement celebrated in Nay Pyi Taw



Chairperson of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech at 4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement as President U Win Myint, former President U Htin Kyaw, vice presidents, Hluttaw speakers, Union Chief Justice, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, officials and guests attend the event in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE 4th anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement was celebrated at the Myanmar International Convention Center II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

It was attended by President U Win Myint, Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Center State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, former President U Htin Kyaw, Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Chief Justice of

the Union U Htun Htun Oo, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt, Chairman of Union Election Commission U Hla Thein, Deputy C-in-C of Defence Services, Commander in Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Deputy Speaker of Amyoth Hluttaw U Aye Thar Aung, Union Ministers, Union Attorney-General, Auditor General of Union, Chairman of Union

NCA is an important agreement for national reconciliation, equality, and establishing a federal union.

State Counsellor
Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

Civil Service Board, Chairman of Peace Commission, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, Chief Ministers of Regions and States, Chairman of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, Governor of Central Bank of Myanmar, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air Force) and the Office of Commander in Chief (Army), chairpersons of Hluttaw Affairs Committees, Commanders, Deputy Ministers, representatives from political parties, witnesses of NCA Signing, members of UPCC and UPWC, committee

members of JMC-U, leaders and representatives from the signatories of ethnic armed groups, diplomats, representatives from international organizations and invited guests.

The ceremony started with the performance of artistes from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture with the song of 'Truth from Panglong Land', followed by screening of a peace process documentary video and the performance of Kayan youth with the song of 'Peace is Essential'.

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NRPC Chairperson receives KNU delegation



Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Center and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with a delegation led by Karen National Union Chairman Saw Mutu Say Poe in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

CHAIRPERSON of National Reconciliation and Peace Center and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received Karen

National Union Chairman Saw Mutu Say Poe and delegation at the parlour of the Myanmar International Convention Center

II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on the ways

to overcome challenges in the peace making process, making agreements on the frameworks for implementing NCA, plans

for peace process beyond 2020 elections, holding Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM), absence of Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) in the 4th anniversary of NCA, and plans for lasting peace and national reconciliation.

The meeting was also attended by Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe, Peace Commission Chairman Dr Tin Myo Win, Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo, Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Min Thu, Deputy Ministers U Khin Maung Tin and U Hla Maw Oo, Director General U Zaw Htay, KNU General Secretary P'doh Saw Tah Doh Moo, Joint General Secretary-2 P'doh Saw Hla Tun, Military/Political Advisor P'doh Saw Tu Tu Lay, CEC member Saw Roger Khin, CPC members Saw Tar Nee, Saw Thamein Tun, Saw Aie Z Phoe, Saw Tar Malar Thaw and P'doh Saw Shwe Maung.—MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Speech delivered by KNU Chairman Saw Mutu Say Poe at 4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in Nay Pyi Taw

ESTEEMED the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the State Counsellor, the Commander in Chief of Defence Services, senior government officials, senior Tatmadaw officials, leaders of ethnic armed organizations, international dignitaries and the invited guests;

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for an opportunity to represent the ethnic armed organizations who signed the NCA for this opening remark at the 4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

First, I make my best wishes for being healthy and wealthy of all the persons here. It is unfortunate that the members of Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) missed this anniversary although we were very hopeful about their participation.

The government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the ethnic armed organizations signed the NCA four years ago. However, I understand the increasing grudge, doubt, worry and hatred are disturbing the significant development in



Karen National Union Chairman Saw Mutu Say Poe. **PHOTO: MNA**

implementing NCA. We need to review the reason for mistrust, and we need to hold political dialogues based on justice and fairness in implementing peace process.

An objective of NCA is to end armed conflicts which broke out since the country has regained its independence, and to make a lasting peace through peaceful political negotiations.

The NCA was first signed by the eight ethnic armed or-

ganizations. The Mon New State Party (MNSP) and the Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) formally signed the NCA on 13 February 2018, making the 10 signatories in the NCA.

Attempts of government, the Tatmadaw and the NCA signatories have not succeed yet to persuade the remaining ethnic armed organizations to sign the ceasefire deal.

We need to discuss this situation. Only then, the reality of

NCA could be captured. Political dialogues could produce expected results for the emergence of a federal union.

Although we tried for the objectives of NCA for four years, we have not made common interpretations on the terms of NCA. Instead, implementations of NCA were based on the view of individuals.

Some of the ethnic armed organizations have remarked that the peace process is deviating from the expected way, although it might not be a common view and opinion of all the stakeholders. It can be concluded that mistrust, concerns, extremism and desire to gain the upper hand are disturbing political dialogue and peace-making process.

However, we need to make progress in peace process. We need to hold mutual respect among each other for effective cooperation. It is very important to build up a trust among the stakeholders in peace making process. Transparency is also essential for trust-building process. Moreover, all the stakeholders need to make common

understanding and common objectives to overcome the existing disturbances and challenges in finding ways for peace and the ultimate goal of establishing a democracy federal union.

We need to consistently implement the basic principles of NCA that include a paragraph to establish a union based on the principles of democracy and federalism in accordance with the outcomes of political dialogue and in the spirit of Panglong, that fully guarantees democratic rights, national equality and the right to self-determination on the basis of liberty, equality and justice while upholding the principles of non-disintegration of the union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of national sovereignty.

In conclusion, I suggest all the signatories of NCA to implement this agreement based on responsibility and accountability for lasting peace. I also recommend all the stakeholders to build trust and hold mutual respect among each other in developing a democracy federal union.—MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement ...



President U Win Myint, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, officials from the government, Tatmadaw and ethnic armed organizations, and representatives of JMC and UPDJC pose for a documentary photo at the 4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

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Chairperson of NRPC and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Commander in Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Karen National Union (KNU) Chairman Saw Mutu Sae Poe

delivered opening remarks at the ceremony.

Then, President U Win Myint, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, former President U Htin Kyaw, Vice Presidents, Speakers of Hluttaws, Chief Justice of the Union, Commander in

Chief of Defence Services, and leaders of ethnic armed groups had documentary photos taken together with the attendees at the ceremony.

At night, Chairperson of NRPC and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi organized a

banquet for the attendees of the 4th anniversary of NCA. It was attended by President U Win Myint, former President U Htin Kyaw, Vice Presidents, Speakers of Hluttaws, Chief Justice of the Union, Commander in Chief of Defence Services, leaders

and members of ethnic armed groups, and the invited guests.

At the dinner, President U Win Myint and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi cordially greeted those attended the dinner. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism gathers support of Japan for travel sector development

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung led a delegation to attend Tourism Expo Japan 2019 and the 3rd Tourism Ministers Roundtable Discussion from 24 to 27 October, upon the invitation of the head of World Tourism Organization and JATA Tourism Expo Secretary.

The Union Minister met with Mr Ichiro Aisawa and Mr Hiromichi Watanabe, Executive Director and Secretary respectively, of Japan-Myanmar Hluttaw Friendly Relations Team and Japan Cherry Foundation on 23 October at Japan's parliament building, Tokyo.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister met with the Japanese Deputy Minister for Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Mr Wada Masamune.

Next, he met with lower house representative Ms Tomoko Ukishima and entourage where they discussed the inclusion of a cooking programme for Myanmar foods favoured by Japanese organized by Myanmar Restaurants Association at the tourism expo in Osaka.

They also discussed JICA assistance for development of various sectors in Myanmar, pos-



Japan-Myanmar Hluttaw Friendly Relations Executive Director Mr Ichiro Aisawa presents the gift to Union Minister U Ohn Maung in Japan. **PHOTO: MNA**

sible cooperation with Japan to develop Myanmar's SMEs by collaborating with Myanmar's tourism associations, and the benefits from the Japanese-Myanmar translation application for tourists.

The lower house MP said

she will hasten implementation of processes related to improving Japan-Myanmar relations and cooperate on SME development.

On 24 October, the Union Minister and delegation attended the opening ceremony of

Tourism Expo Japan 2019 at Hyatt Regency Osaka. After that, the Union Minister attended the ministers discussion with WTO Secretary-General and ministers and deputy ministers for tourism from 23 countries. The Union Minister then answered to

questions on Myanmar's travel sector to journalists at the event.

On 25 October, the Union Minister received the Executive Director of Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office (MTCO) at the expo. The latter spoke of his wish to organize the Mekong Tourism Forum in world-heritage site Bagan in the coming year and to transport attendees there to popular travel destination in Myanmar.

The Union Minister replied that he supports the idea of hosting the forum in Bagan and will provide the necessary assistance. He requested MTCO further cooperation in developing Myanmar's travel sector. The Union Minister also met with JATA Chairman and his entourage and also talked of travel sector development.

Afterwards, the Union Minister met with cherry flower expert Mr Terumi Takaoka and discussed preparations for organizing the fourth Myanmar Cherry Flower Festival. He then toured the Myanmar exhibition booths.— MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Speech delivered by State Counsellor at 4th Anniversary of NCA

GREETINGS to Mr. President and guests, individuals and organizations who have assisted the peace process and ethnic brothers and sisters who have come from afar.

Fourth anniversary of NCA

Today's event is the fourth anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). First, I would like to express my appreciation to all NCA signatories who are striving to strengthen the implementation of the NCA at this time.

Peace agreements are risky political and military decisions. I honor all leaders, former President U Thein Sein and officials of the former government, Tatmadaw leaders and ethnic leaders who have signed the agreement after making courageous decisions for the country's stability and for a peaceful and bright future for the next generation of youths. I also wish to recognize the fact that the march towards peace has continued with firm belief in unity during these past four years.

The NCA is not only for ceasefire alone. It is not only an agreement indicating clearly on how to implement the peace process. It is a political accord on what path to take towards establishing a democracy federal union. Throughout our country's history this is the only agreement that was aimed toward the establishment of a federal union. It is an important agreement for national reconciliation, equality and establishment of a federal union. The difficulties we are facing today are not because of the NCA but due to the weakness in implementing the NCA, requirements to abide by it and misunderstandings. I am sure everyone will understand that those leaders who have signed the NCA need to keep their promises in implementing the NCA.

Looking at the past four years after signing the NCA, this year, 2019, saw the least number armed conflicts between the Tatmadaw and EAOs (Ethnic Armed Organizations). This was because of the unilateral ceasefire announced by the military on one hand and the continuous dialogues between the government and the EAOs on the other hand. We must say this is a good development.

It is obvious that those who suffer the most from the armed conflicts are our ethnic national



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech at the 4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

racers. Billions of dollars of properties, livelihoods, businesses as well as invaluable lives and limbs were lost. Displaced youths were unable to obtain an education and were left behind in progress and development. The biggest loss was the threat posed by these conflicts to the future of the union. The feelings, hurts and pains of the ethnic minorities were to be understood from our heart. From this understanding, we can establish a peace that leads towards conflict resolution.

Dream of the Union

Looking at the history of the world, there were a lot of peace processes and political dialogues which can be taken as examples. Everyone knows the longest running internal armed conflict in our country with its numerous and complex background history. The problems and issues were not simple and clear. Each issue could not be isolated and resolved one by one. Only when we understand the complexity of the long drawn out conflict can we have the patience and understanding.

The dream of establishing a union started with the 1947 20th Century Panglong Conference have not become a reality to this date and time. The dreams and expectations of our forefathers have become the dreams and expectations of the new generation. To date, we have been striving towards making this dream

a reality. It is the historic duty of all who are in attendance today to establish a union cherished and valued by our people.

Our 21st Century Panglong Conference is a historic political conference to resolve the internal armed conflicts rooted in our country's history. It is important for all to strive together firmly towards establishing a democratic federal union with assurance for democracy, equality and self-determination by resolving political problems through political means by peaceful discussion and coordination.

This voyage is long with highs and lows, ups and downs. Sometimes we will be keen and enthusiastic. Sometimes we will be disheartened and disappointed. The road to a democratic federal union will pass through dark or bright or murky times. Sometimes we may see our distant goal as a faint image. We all know the challenges and obstacles that we may face. Strength is the determining factor in the short run but in the long run, persistence and determination are important. As the journey gets long, our moral strength, determinations, understandings etc. can wane.

As travelers going on the same boat on the same journey towards with the same determination, we need to understand and help one another to reach our destination. The people and history will decide who wants peace and who doesn't. At the

moment, problems are not the issue. The issue is how to resolve these problems. For our union and for our future generations, we must use the present valuably to resolve the problems of today.

Government's determination toward federal

Ever since we assumed the responsibility of the country our government has pledged to strive towards establishing a democratic federal union. This was even before we became a government. We said this even during the time when the word "federal" couldn't be spoken openly. We consistently spoke of achieving agreement by political discussion and coordination based on the peace process. Our policy was to establish unity and resolve issues through discussion and dialogue so that the people were not hurt.

We said repeatedly that achieving sustainable peace would be possible only if a true federal union could be established. Division of power must be in accordance with a federal system. All federal units are equal. States will have a constitution that assures self-determination. Our government accepted as a basic principle that the division of power in States was to be based on the people. It is important for all to participate at a discussion table to establish detailed basic principles.

There'll be some who hold firmly to their own stands without making give and take or concessions. Flexibility and give and take are required if a true peace and a true federal union is to be established. We laid down this principle in the political dialogues but we didn't aim our discussion toward this. We approach it by listening to the points raised by ethnic people. We didn't force our wishes just because we were the government. Looking back, the Part I and II of Union Accords were all based on discussion based on the desires and proposals of the ethnic people. Standing on our own stands and discussing is not a true discussion and negotiation. We work towards finding a solution.

Three future processes

In today's 4th anniversary of the NCA, we would like to inform the government's three future peace processes.

The first peace process is

the common process of how to proceed with 21st Century Union Peace Conference. This was proposed by the leaders of EAOs that had signed the NCA. We seriously contemplated this proposal. We all accepted the requirement for a process that all agreed on in going forward based on the NCA. From numerous unofficial meetings we reached to these three points. The first was to obtain a framework agreement on implementing NCA. This framework agreement will be the first part of the Union Accord that will be signed at the 21st Century Union Peace Conference fourth session.

The second was to discuss and negotiate towards getting additional basic principle points in addition to the 51 basic principle points achieved. These basic principle points will be the second part of the Union Accord that will be signed at the 21st Century Union Peace Conference fourth session.

The third was to have a common agreement on stage wise work processes in post 2020 election period and priority programs. If agreements were reached this will be the third part of the Union Accord that will be signed at the 21st Century Union Peace Conference fourth session.

I wish to thank the government, Hluttaw, Tatmadaw, NCA signatory EAOs, political parties and all related persons their assistance towards setting as a milestone the Union Accord Part III consisting of these three parts and all are urged to strive toward achieving success.

The government's future peace process second part is participation of all that ought to participate in the peace process. Our government have been increasing the momentum of meeting and discussing with EAOs that hadn't signed the NCA yet to reach a point where the number of armed conflicts and engagements were reduced. We will strive towards participation of all that ought to participate to come under the umbrella of NCA. Those who didn't sign the NCA for various reasons were now participating in the discussion. At the moment leaders of the groups that have not signed the NCA are urged to take another step towards participating in the historical political discussion.

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State Counsellor to pay official visit to Thailand

AT the invitation of General Paryut Chan-o-cha (Retd), Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, will leave for Thailand in near future to attend the 35th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits. — MNA ■

Without establishing a federal union based on the equality of the ethnic people, we will not see peace in our country: State Counsellor

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We still have gaps to fill because all that ought to participate hadn't participated in our political dialogue. We will strive towards a situation that is all-inclusive.

The third part of the government's peace process is for the people to taste the fruits of peace. The grassroots people at the bottom are mainly feeling the injuries caused by the conflicts. They don't have any further in-

jury worse than this. The world today is going toward technology revolution 4.0. While youths in other countries are developing Artificial Intelligence, virtual communities, industrial revolution, digital movements, we need to provide future assurances to our ethnic youths in the ethnic regions.

Those who had started the armed conflicts are no longer around this time in today's 21st century. But the historic duty and responsibility of stopping this in-

ternal conflict and implementing the dream of a federal union lies on the shoulders of all who are in this hall. How will our world be in the next ten years? How will our ethnic nationals be? All leaders must think deeply about this. Are we going to pass on the same conflict?

Think how far our pride, ego, distrust, etc. will affect our future generation and how far they will lag behind due to it. Our government wanted to establish a federal union that our ethnic

people had dreamt for years. It is not time, but well past time for our country to achieve peace.

In conclusion everyone in the union needs to believe and value the unity that the union provides. This unity is not established or achieved through force but through foresight and mindset. Without establishing a federal union based on equality of ethnic people, we wouldn't see peace in our country. Without establishing an ethnic national unity based on Panglong spirit,

our country wouldn't develop. This was proven by the past 70 years. It is possible to change this situation if we all put in the same efforts.

Our government will put all our efforts towards this three part peace process. All are urged in conclusion to cooperate and work hand in hand with us towards laying the basic foundations of peace, equality and establishment of a federal system.

Thank you.
(Translated by Zaw Min)

Union Minister for Information attends Tokyo International Film Festival



An NHK official explains a poster at their head office to Union Minister Dr Pe Myint. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint and delegation visited Kamakura Film Museum on 27 October afternoon and observed the books on filmography presented there.

Formerly the home of Japanese film producer Nagamasa Kawakita and his wife Kashiko, it was transformed into a museum as a homage to the couple who believed that a cinema is the best platform for building friendly relations and understanding. In addition to displaying film books and magazines, the museum also hosts film festivals, workshops

and other services to the film community.

The Union Minister also visited IMAGICA Lab Co in Tokyo yesterday morning and observed their post-production processes. The company was founded in 1935 and provides technological assistance and archival services to film businesses. They handle planning, production and distribution of films, TV shows, commercials, images and games for mobile phones, 2k and 4k film archiving with digital format, scanning and metadata management system.

From there, the Union Minister visited Shochiku Otani Library and observed its theatre, film and TV scripts, books, documents, photos and records. The library was opened by Otani Takejiro in 1958, the founder of Shochiku Co Ltd, after he was awarded the Order of Culture. It has a collection of more than 420,000 books, documents and archival records. The Union Minister then visited the company building and observed the production, sales and purchase of TV shows and media software.

The company was first estab-

lished by Mr Takejiro Otani and Matsujino Shirani in 1985. It released the first color film in Japan and the world's longest running film series. The company also handles sound systems, music copyright licenses, theatre preparations and renting, management and clarifying real estate.

Next, the Union Minister visited NHK station and observed broadcasting of domestic and foreign news in Japanese and English, preparations to broadcast news in formats suitable for people with disabilities and children, and news on natural disasters.

NHK was established on 24 November 1924 as Tokyo Broadcasting Station and reorganized as Japan Broadcasting Corpo-

ration (NHK), in 1926 as a state-owned station.

Later in the evening, the Union Minister attended Tokyo International Film Festival at the Roppongi Theater in Minato, Tokyo and viewed international films at the opening ceremony.

The film festival was first organized in 1985 and held once every two years till 1991, after which it became an annual event. It is one of several prominent Asian film festivals accredited by International Federation of Film Producers Associations. The film festival gives out awards for best film, director, actor and actress. It will run from 28 October to 5 November and screen over 200 international films. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Masters of ceremonies opening Tokyo International Film Festival to the audience in Roppongi Theater. PHOTO: MNA

Speech delivered by C-in-C of Defence Services at 4th anniversary of NCA

TODAY is the fourth anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) which is signed to practically realize internal unity and peace which is the actual requirement of our country. I would like to extend greetings that may all the government officials led by the President of the State, officials of ethnic armed organizations, officials of internal/external organizations taking part in the multiple sectors for national peace, and all the attendees at this ceremony enjoy peace and tranquility and have greater unity and strength in serving the interest of the State and the Union and in realizing peace.

The present is the fourth ceremony marking the NCA meeting, and at every ceremony officials extended greeting and delivered addresses. I also extended greetings at the previous three ceremonies. First, I would like to remind you some of the important points of my previous speeches.

At the first anniversary, I explained the emergence of the NCA and spoke of the need to pay attention to the six peace principles of the Tatmadaw. As regards the NCA I recounted the period of over four years from the time all the EAOs were invited to the peace talks in opening a new chapter for peace till it is first signed on 15 October 2015 and the implementation of the different stages of peace process through unity and collective power as a reinvigoration for future stages of the peace process. I dealt with the conviction the Tatmadaw it received from its peace endeavours throughout the different periods of history and its objective goal, which is its six peace principles. Moreover, I also explained in detail that six peace principles and NCA would pave the way for establishing a federal democratic Union through peace.

At the second anniversary, I explained that the Tatmadaw had paved the way towards multiparty democracy, aspired by the entire people, and the political, economic and social preparations made since the administration of the Tatmadaw government to conveniently proceed on the path, the importance of NCA and the need to sign the NCA.

At the third anniversary, I elaborated on the broadening of the powers by making additions and amendments to the schedule 2 and 5 of the State Constitution (2008) in connection with the importance of the expression “non-secession” in interest of the people and then explained in detail the history of Tatmadaw and the matter of the sole Tatmadaw together with historical backgrounds. I made those clarifications to express the Tatmadaw’s steadfast stand on the NCA, its serious attitude towards peace, non-disintegration of the Union and non-disintegration of national solidarity. The Tatmadaw will firmly continue its peace process, while standing by the NCA.

I have already said it is Tatmadaw soldiers who want most to end internal armed conflicts as they have to risk life and limb in armed clashes. To prove this statement, Tatmadaw declared unilateral ceasefire, which is unprecedented in Myanmar’s history, on 21 December, 2018, ushering into first over four months of unilateral ceasefire. Before that, some EAOs, some political forces, and some local and foreign organizations continuously suggested that Tatmadaw should declare ceasefire with magnanimity, and that peace would be achieved if Tatmadaw did so. Tatmadaw acted on their suggestions and declared unilateral ceasefire, which is unprecedented around the world, proving its commitment to peace. Tatmadaw extended its unilateral ceasefire four times with the hope of expediting the peace process, and the ceasefire period covered nine months through 21 September, 2019. People around the country have witnessed the harsh realities of what

happened.

In some areas overseen by five military commands where Tatmadaw declared unilateral ceasefire for the sake of eternal peace, although few places face clashes to least numbers, there were clashes between EAOs over territorial disputes, and people had suffered consequences. Meanwhile, some EAOs, taking advantage of the ceasefire, strengthened their armies and expanded their territories. There were murders of innocent civilians and targeted attacks on roads, bridges, towns and villages.

Clashes have virtually ceased in some regions, but the situation was different in Rakhine State. Rakhine had in successive periods been a stable and peaceful area coded as white color; but instability arose due to terrorist acts of the ARSA in Buthidaung and Maungtway, and the lives and property of local ethnic people including Rakhine, Mro and Khami were put at risk. Entire villages had to flee. Tatmadaw made much sacrifice to protect the lives and property of our local ethnic people, who are the minority there. Amid instability created by the ARSA, the AA launched insurgent attacks on four outnumbered border guard police outposts which were protecting ethnic villages in Buthidaung, on 4 January, 2019, bringing its insurgency to next level. Those attacks were inappropriate for our democratization process. Tatmadaw just cannot stand by and do nothing in response to those insurgent attacks. Tatmadaw have to protect local ethnic people against the ARSA, as well as against the AA’s insurgency at the same time.

During the unilateral ceasefire, Tatmadaw urged

In peace process, pointing the finger at the past will not secure peace. All of us, who belong to the present time, share the responsibility to build a more peaceful and developed socio-economy.

the ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) to discuss peace process with the National Reconciliation and Peace Center (NRPC) in a more effective manner. If necessary, a Tatmadaw negotiation team was formed with eight Tatmadaw members. On 1 July and 14 August, Tatmadaw issued two statements, calling on the EAOs to be able to discuss peace process without minimum delay because it does not advance as the entire ethnic people expected. However, roads, bridges, towns and villages existing on Mandalay-Lashio-Muse Union Highway had to experience destructive acts committed by the terrorists as of 15 August. Terrorist attacks were found in PyinOoLwin, Nawngkhio, Lashio and Kutkai. We will have to review such destructive situations. We will have to ask whether these ethnic were their rights.

The root cause of internal insurgency currently occurring in our country was due to the divide-and-rule policy practiced by the colonialists. The consequences of divide-and-rule administration resulted in the disunity among our ethnics and changed into ethnic armed conflicts. In the parliamentary democratic era from 1948 to 1958 after regaining independence, the differences in politics, race, ethics and ideology became the root cause of armed conflicts, an armed policy that was opposed to successive governments currently taking place until now. Tatmadaw is an organization that is responsible for defending the State and its sovereignty. The EAOs, themselves, know very well how they existed, where



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers a speech at the 4th anniversary of Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

they derived from which organizations and their origins.

We have no reasons to blame the past period for what had happened and blaming can’t bring about more development. Most of the ethnic organizations are saying about self-administration in building internal peace at the present time. It is also a matter to be prioritized. In so doing, the peace process becomes smoother and speedier. Tatmadaw always pays prioritized attention to the ethnic affairs while performing the interests of the people. For that reason, I assume that ethnic demands should be favoured in the move of constitutional amendment. The Union Peace Conference also known as the 21st Century Panglong Conference came into existence as ethnics’ peace desire is favoured. In this state, I believe peace and politics should be beheld in separate ways and it will work properly and practically. Panglong Conference is to regain independence and it is to discuss how to establish the Union after regaining independence. The politics is discussed as priority. The Union Peace Conference (21st Century Panglong Conference) that is currently held is to mainly focus on peace how to immediately end the armed conflicts. We must aware of this fact.

Tatmadaw always seeks to serve the interests of the people and national interests of the country either in the peace process or nation-building endeavors. Successive governments in successive periods must have done to the best of their ability in undertaking those kinds of tasks, depending on the time and situation.

In peace process, pointing the finger at the past will not secure peace. All of us, who belong to the present time, share the responsibility to build a more peaceful and developed socio-economy. I would like to suggest that if we assess objectively our faults and shortcomings of the past and continue to work with genuine desire for the peace, the peace process will be successful. We must aware of the fact that peace negotiation for achieving eternal peace will not be successful if the dialogue is clouded with doubts and extreme self-interest.

At this juncture, I would like to say the federal system talked by ethnic armed organizations and some political forces. I know they define various meanings of the federal system in different norms. No matter how different meanings they define and various norms they set, its essence is “together” and “harmony”.

We need to focus on the topics in detail how to implement the rights and aims resulted from discharging duties and obligations for united living and harmony through the peaceful negotiation and searching answers which is a democratic way.

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Slowing demand, supply glut at Muse gate drive down watermelon prices



Trucks with watermelon are waiting for inspection to enter China. PHOTO: THANT ZIN

WATERMELON prices have been cooling due to a supply glut coupled with a fall in demand at Muse gate, according to Khwarnyo Trading Co Ltd.

On 18 October, about 90 trucks loaded with watermelons entered Muse gate. The number of trucks crossed 110 on 19 October, and between 20 and 28 October, 145-210 trucks entered the gate daily, thereby driving down prices, said traders.

“Chinese traders are quoting a lower than actual market price owing to some flaws in the fruits, and stocks are piling at the gate. The fruit quality is directly related to weather conditions,” said the traders.

“Some trucks brought watermelons back to the Muse gate as they were found to be of poor quality, and the fruits were sold

off at low prices at the gate. Additionally, there are still watermelon stocks left on the Muse side,” said Sai Khin Maung, the owner of the Khwarnyo Watermelon depot.

There is a large price gap depending on the variety of watermelons and whether they are grown in cold Shan State and central regions, such as Mandalay and Sagaing. Watermelons from Shan State are highly demanded than those from central regions due to better quality, said traders.

With the influx of watermelons at Muse gate, the prices have slid to 700-1,400 Yuan per ton.

So far in the watermelon season, about 2,000 tons of watermelons have been exported to China.

Watermelons and muskmelons top the list of fruits exported to China, and the export volume is increasing significantly year

over year, according to the Ministry of Commerce. If growers follow GAP guidelines, they can get higher prices. But, majority of them are still using pesticides, said officials. Myanmar currently exports around 800,000 tons of watermelons per year.

The volume of watermelon exports was estimated at 500,000 tons in the 2014-2015 fiscal year, over 560,000 in the 2015-2016FY, and over 170,000 tons in the mini-budget period (from April to September, 2018).

Watermelons and muskmelons are primarily grown in Mandalay and Sagaing regions and Shan State. Myanmar’s watermelons and muskmelons have grabbed a large market share in China. —Thant Zin/ Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar coconut trader body to ink purchase agreement with Thai counterparts in Nov

THE Myanmar Coconut Growers and Traders Association will sign a purchase agreement with Thailand traders in November, according to news released by the Ministry of Commerce online.

“At present, one dried coconut is fetching 20 Baht. Last year, it was priced at 10-15 Baht. Myanmar’s coconuts will be sent to the Thailand market where they will get a good price,” said U Myo Win, the chair of the Myanmar Coconut Growers and Traders Association.

“Last year, Myanmar traders exported coconuts to Muse gate alone. As coconuts have begun fetching a high price in the Thai

market, the traders will return to shipping them to Thailand. The price and volume of coconuts are still being negotiated. We expect to reach an agreement next month,” he added.

“As local coconut production is still low to meet foreign market demand, we can only discuss a short-term agreement,” he said.

Myanmar has been exporting coconuts to Thailand through the legitimate trade channel since 2015. Local consumption of fresh coconut has become higher this year, with trade doubling compared with the previous years.

At present, local coconut production is on the decline. There-

fore, the association is making concerted efforts to encourage growers to cultivate quality coconuts.

In the domestic market, the price of dried coconuts currently stands at K500-800. There are over 130,000 acres of coconut farms in Myanmar, and over 100,000 can produce fruit, as per data from the association. An acre can produce 1,000-5,000 fruits depending on the coconut variety and nursing of trees. Ayeyawady Region is the main producing region, while Kayah State registers the lowest production rate. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

External trade touches \$1.59 bln in first 18 days of 2019-2020FY

MYANMAR’S external trade between 1 and 18 October in the current fiscal year reached US\$1.59 billion, a decline of \$284 million compared to the corresponding period of the 2018-2019 fiscal, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Both maritime and border trade showed a decrease compared with the year-ago period. Maritime imports registered a sharp fall, while exports slowed at border gates, with trade between Myanmar and Thailand at the Htikhee border plunging by \$200 million.

In the first 18 days of the financial year, Myanmar’s exports were estimated at \$750.3 million, and imports were valued at \$847.6 million. In the previous FY, trade stood at \$1.88 billion, according to data released by

the ministry.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods.

The country’s export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Export earnings from the CMP (cutting, making, and packaging) garment businesses are rising, while reliance on natural resources, such as natural gas and jade, is lessening.

The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports, according to the Ministry of Commerce. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Japan’s investments in Myanmar likely to rise in the current fiscal: DICA

By Nyein Nyein

MORE investments from Japan are expected in the current financial year, said U Thant Sin Lwin, the Director-General of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

“Japan focuses on responsible businesses. Therefore, they thoughtfully consider and learn before they make investments. It is expected that investments from Japan will increase this year,” said U Thant Sin Lwin.

“Additionally, Japanese businesses are prepping to enter Myanmar. The Thilawa Special Economic Zone is a symbol of development in Japan’s investments in Myanmar. Besides, Japan is a development partner of Myanmar,” he added.

“Japan has been lending comprehensive support in developing infrastructure—including railway, road, and research—in Myanmar through the Japan International Cooperation Agency,” said U Thant Sin Lwin.

At the invitation of the Government of Japan, a Myanmar delegation, led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, visited Japan from 20 to 24 October to attend the enthronement ceremony of Japanese Emperor Naruhito. During the visit, the State Counsellor met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the State Guest House in Tokyo. The meeting focused

on matters pertaining to the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Japan, and fostering economic cooperation between the two countries, including in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

The State Counsellor also attended the 2nd Myanmar Investment Conference at the Meiji Kinenkan Hall and delivered the keynote speech. In her speech, the State Counsellor outlined the various aspects of the ongoing liberalization of Myanmar’s economy, the commitments of the Myanmar government towards economic development and foreign investment, the opportunities for investment in Myanmar, and the status of Japanese investments in Myanmar. She also invited Japanese companies and businesspersons to make more investments in Myanmar.

At present, Japan is ranked 10th among 50 countries with a large share of investment in Myanmar. Since 1988, 117 Japan-listed enterprises have been permitted to bring investments of US\$1.2 billion as of 30 September, according to statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

Foreign investments of over \$670 million have flowed into the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) from 39 Japan businesses, under the Special Economic Zone Law. (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Take step forward to build a federal democratic union

THERE would be no denying that peace is most desired by the people of Myanmar, which has been experiencing armed conflicts since it gained independence in 1948.

Over successive generations, our people have had their share of bitter experiences and struggled with low socio-economic standards as the country succumbed to the fires of internal armed conflicts soon after independence.

Our country has not yet escaped from the trap of poverty and armed conflicts, while other countries are participating in the technology revolution 4.0, with cutting-edge innovations.

Our people, especially ethnic people residing in areas racked with armed conflict, have been waiting for over 70 years for peace.

In fact, those who stoked the fires of internal conflict are long gone. But, the duty of putting out the fire has fallen on

our shoulders. Now is the time for our generation to ask itself whether it wants to leave the country or the next generation with armed conflicts or not.

We do not think that any of us would wish to avoid, reject, or shrink from this responsibility. The energy, faith, and effort that we put in to achieve peace can serve as a beacon of light for our country, our Union, and all of our people.

Political dialogue would not be complete without the participation of stakeholders who should have been at the table. Why? The responsibility to end the long-running conflict rests on the shoulders of all the people. A federal system which is acceptable to all would mark the end of armed conflicts.

Our goal is the "emergence of a democratic federal union based on democracy

and federalism".

Whether or not we achieve this goal depends on us. It is a responsibility that falls on all of our shoulders.

To ensure an all-inclusive approach towards bringing peace to the country, the Union Government will step up efforts for negotiating with the non-signatory groups, as part of efforts for reducing armed conflicts.

Hence, we would like to request those armed groups which have not yet signed the NCA to take a step forward by signing the agreement and take part in the historic peace dialogue, under the umbrella of the NCA.

Harboring past grudges and distrust cannot bring peace to the country.

Let's build a federal democratic country envisaged by all ethnic people. Our efforts today will determine the peace we enjoy in our world tomorrow.



ASEAN's intensified efforts vs. plastic pollution crucial to migratory birds' survival

By Dr. Theresa Mundita S. Lim/ACB

ASMIGRATORY waterbirds are interconnected and interdependent to the network of wetland sites at the EAAF, regional cooperation is critical for their conservation.

Efforts to address plastic pollution is gaining traction in the region. Plastic pollution is a serious threat to migratory birds, with one million seabirds dying from the effects of plastic every year.

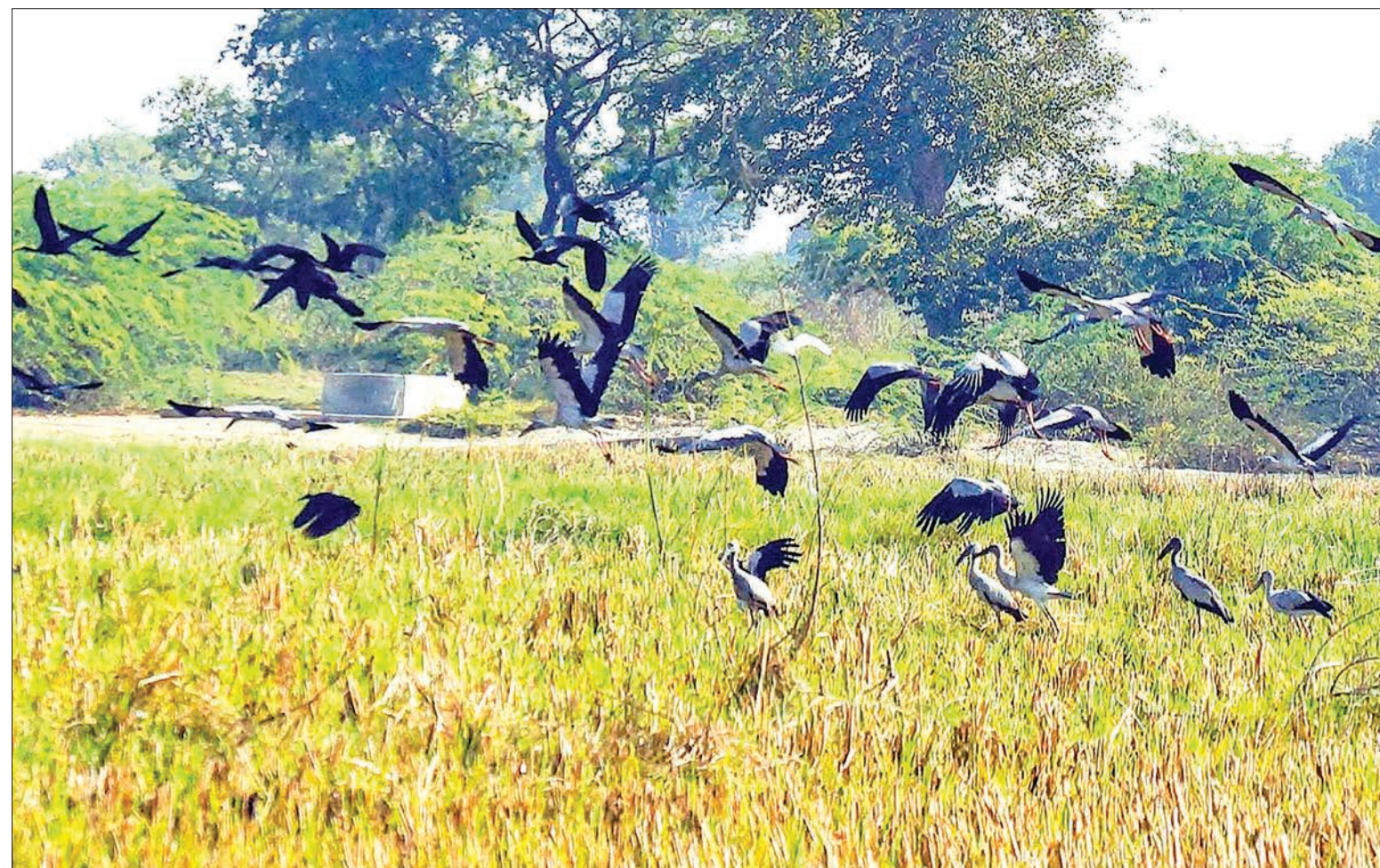
The ASEAN Member States (AMS) including Myanmar are engaging in regional cooperation through the signing of the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris, and through individual AMS' efforts in reducing single-use plastic.

A related migratory bird conservation initiative is the ASEAN Flyway Network that facilitates regional cooperation for the conservation of waterbirds and the wetlands that support them.

Every year, 50 million waterbirds journey between their northern breeding grounds as far as Arctic Russia to their wintering grounds in Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. These birds fly through the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF), their long-established route as they travel to warmer climates after breeding in the northern regions, and back again during breeding season.

The ASEAN Region is at the heart of EAAF, and is thus significant to these waterbirds' annual migration. As migratory waterbirds are interconnected and interdependent to the network of wetland sites at the EAAF, regional cooperation is critical for their conservation and survival.

Migratory birds are im-



Migratory birds are seen in Meikhtila last year. PHOTO: CHANTHAR (MEIKHTILA)

portant in healthy ecosystems as they travel distances and carry seeds from one place to another, one way they link ecosystems together across the world. They are also indicators of how healthy an area's biodiversity is. United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) Convention on Migratory Species data show that at-risk conservation areas for birds also have a significant number of threatened species of plants and animals.

This World Migratory Day, the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) highlights the importance of regional cooperation in protecting migratory birds and their habitats. With this year's theme, "Protect Birds: Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution!",

the ACB joins the international community in the global fight against plastic pollution.

Plastic and other marine debris is an issue that transcends nations' boundaries, as these debris move around the oceans, possibly entering other nations' waters. UN Environment estimates that more than eight million tonnes of plastic get in the oceans each year, equal to dumping a garbage truck of plastic every minute.

Plastic pollution is a serious threat to migratory birds. One million seabirds around the world die from the effects of plastic every year. Currently, 90 per cent of seabirds have plastic in their guts, and this proportion is expected to reach 99 per cent by 2050. If this trend continues, these birds may not survive the next generations.

Regional cooperation is thus essential to address this threat. Efforts in the region to reduce plastic pollution and marine debris are gaining traction. The 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS) adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in the ASEAN Region during the 34th ASEAN Summit held last June. In signing the Declaration, AMS'

heads of state committed to prevent and reduce marine debris using an integrated land-to-sea approach, strengthen national laws and regulations, and enhance regional and international cooperation, including on relevant policy dialogue and information sharing.

The ACB commends the AMS for taking measures to reduce single-use plastic in their respective jurisdictions prior to and after the Bangkok Declaration. Brunei Darussalam has enjoined major stores and businesses for its "No Plastic Bag Everyday Initiative," and is now engaging small businesses and consumers.

Cambodia charges for plastic bags to encourage the switch to reusable bags. It is now aiming to attract investments in plastic recycling businesses. Several localities in Indonesia like Bali, Banjarmasin City, Balikpapan City, and more have banned single-use plastic. Likewise, different municipalities in the Philippines, including Los Baños, home to the ACB headquarters, have taken the same action. Indonesia also imposes a plastic bag tax.

Lao PDR and Myanmar are pushing for plastic alternatives

At the moment, Viet Nam imposes environment tax on plastic bags.

These are just among some of the AMS' initiatives in addressing the issue of plastic and marine debris.

Another initiative in migratory bird conservation in the ASEAN Region is the creation of the ASEAN Flyway Network, a virtual network of flyway site managers and other key stakeholders in the ASEAN region that facilitates regional cooperation needed to ensure the conservation of the migratory waterbirds and the wetlands that support them along the EAAF. The establishment of the AFN was facilitated by the ACB through the project "Improving Biodiversity Conservation of Wetlands and Migratory Waterbirds in ASEAN Region." The project is being supported by the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund and is led by Singapore, through the National Parks Board. The project aims to enable effective networking within the AMS to share knowledge and collaborate in conservation efforts, conduct national planning workshops to identify priorities and challenges in conservation, and address information gaps across ASEAN on existing flyway sites, potential sites, and priority coastal areas. This year, waterbird counts and

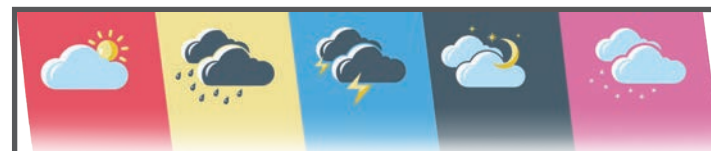
Lao PDR and Myanmar are pushing for plastic alternatives like bamboo straws. Lao PDR encourages the public to use recyclable bags, while Myanmar has banned single-use plastic in its capital city Yangon.

already banned plastic lids and straws for dine-in customers in fast food chains in 2018.

Malaysia aims to phase out drinking straws and plastic carrier bags by 2030. Thailand intends to ban single-use plastic products and styrofoam food containers by 2022, and Viet Nam envisions zero non-biodegradable plastic bags by 2026.

wetland assessment surveys are ongoing in target wetland sites.

With these coordinated efforts in the ASEAN region, we at the ACB are hopeful for the future of migratory birds and for the related species that will benefit from these actions.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 4:00 pm Monday 28th October, 2019)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 29th October, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions and isolated in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin, Rakhine and Kayah States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3-6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago and Yangon Regions and Shan State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28th October, 2019: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28th October, 2019: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28th October, 2019: Partly cloudy.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.). - Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Yangon Secretariat opened to public

THE Yangon Secretariat, a colonial-era landmark located on the Theinbyu Road in Yangon, has finally been opened for visitors, said U Phyo Min Thein, the Chief Minister of Yangon Region.

He made the remarks at the Yangon Expo-2019, held to promote the tourism sector in the region.

"People are interested in visiting Yangon's Secretariat office because they want to know the history of the building. So, we have upgraded the old Secretariat office. Now, we are ready to welcome people looking to visit and observe the old Secretariat," said the chief minister.

The old secretariat building, also known as the Prime Minister's Office, was built in the late 19th century, and is more than 120 years old. Standing at the heart of the city, the elegant Victorian-style building served as the seat of government for the British in Myanmar until the country's independence in 1948. The historic building was also the site where Bogyoke Aung San and six cabinet ministers were



The Secretariat building in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG

assassinated by political rivals on 19 July, 1947. Now, the Yangon region government has upgraded the building to attract local and foreign visitors. Currently, souvenir shops, a coffee shop, and an art gallery have been opened at the Secretariat. There are plans to open more galleries and shops at the site. The Secretariat will be

opened to visitors from 9 am to 4:30 pm daily. Visitors are allowed to observe the ground and first floors free of charge. If they want to explore other restricted areas, they will have to pay an admission fee, which has been fixed at K3,000 for locals, K1,000 for local students, US\$10 (K15,000) for foreigners, and \$5 (K8,000) for for-

eign minors aged under 12. Local and foreign minors under four years old are allowed to visit the areas free of charge. Guides have been commissioned to explain the history of the building. At present, more than 400-500 visitors are coming to the old Secretariat office every day. —Myint Maung
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Number of tourists visiting Timit valley up this year

THE number of tourists arriving at the Timit valley, which is an important tourist spot in Chin State, has increased this year, according to U Shwe Htee Ohoe, the Minister of Transport and Communications for Chin State.

"Tourists can observe terraced farming of monsoon paddy, and grape fruits and strawberries, which are grown by local residents using water from the Timit creek," the minister said on Monday.

Timit valley, which is eight miles wide, is located seven miles south of Haka town and 15 miles northwest of Htantlang.

The valley is popular among tourists visiting Haka.

The valley is the historical land of the Chin ethnic people, the minister added.

"The Timit valley has about 140 acres of agricultural land, and it can help the region achieve food sufficiency. The valley is always crowded as it is a nice place for local and foreign travelers to visit. In the winter, travelers can observe the beautiful yellow paddy fields. Some people come to the valley for taking wedding photos and traveling video clips," said a local resident.



Photo shows 'Timit valley', the destination of Haka, Chin State. PHOTO: ZO HAY HSAR

The wild flowers, scenic views, mountains, and wild animals at Timit Valley are a draw for

local and foreign travelers.—Zo Hay Hsar

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Magway General Hospital to expand bed capacity to 500

THE Magway General Hospital is being upgraded its capacity to the 500-bed hospital from the existing the 200-bed healthcare facility, according to Dr Myat Soe, the medical superintendent of the hospital, adding that the building is expected to be operational in 2020.

"Currently, the hospital is running as a 200-bed hospital under the allocated budget.

We would be able to provide health services for around 600 patients after the construction of a five-storey extension of the ward and a three-storey ward for maternal and child health service," he added.

The five-storey extension is under construction with a budget allocated by the regional government and the construction of the three-storey ward has

been undertaken with JICA contributing US\$12.8 million. The construction is expected to be completed in 2020. "The 200-bed General Hospital was opened 55 years ago in 1964. Although the hospital's bed capacity is 200, it has been offering health services to 500 patients every day. Due to the high number of patients, we made a request for the extension of the hospital wards to

the related department," said Dr Myat Soe.

The hospital is providing free healthcare services to some patients who cannot afford to pay medical charges. The funds for needy patients come from the interest of the K90-million health savings account, he said. —Zeyatu (Magway)

(Translated by La Wonn)

Opening speech of C-in-C of Defence Services at 4th anniversary of NCA

FROM PAGE-6

In so doing, only when we hold coordination meetings with the united spirit that 'We all are Myanmar', without emphasizing race, state, region and own organization alone, can we do well.

Currently, the Tatmadaw has made wider studies and been studying the federal system, many quarters are talking about. Studies have been made not only in books and papers but also in the countries which are practising such a system. With regard to the findings, practice of federal system is different from one country to another. Various differences were found in definition, provision, practical exercise, background histories of these countries, organizational setup, structural works, time and situations.

When the studies were made on successful practice of the Union system of India which is the most similar to our country, we found the federal system is not the rights of secession and that it is not fixed how to undertake, and that it is realized in conformity with own race and geographical conditions. It was found that democracy federal system is based on power sharing between the central government and state governments through the trend of agreements of the majority without harming own country, national interest of own race and sovereignty of the State. To do so, the tables on rights of legislature are exactly mentioned in the constitution.

With regard to this point, we need to consider the rights of self-ruling. We need to widely consider and to seek the best way for such issue. It needs to review that what laws region and state Hluttaws have passed in connection with Schedules 1, 2, 3 and 5 of the

Union Legislative List mentioned in the constitution of our country and to what degree the development undertakings for the regions and states have been carried out based on the said laws. Moreover, it needs to review that how they practically applied the extended rights of the legislative lists of regions, states, self-administered division and zones.

There are not issues that just prescribing the rights, chances, entitlements and responsibilities is not complete. We all must practically strive for building it. As democracy is a system which centres the people, the entire ethnic people must have higher knowledge and skill power to be able to work in concert.

Knowledge is experiences we have passed along our lives, and skill is to a technique to learn. We all should apply the knowledge and skills in development of our region, town and country. Anyone will not strive for successful building the democratic federal Union. We will establish the federal democracy system that is suitable to the country. Our ethnic people and citizens ourselves must strive for nation-building tasks.

In so doing, instead of the focus on a single desire that is incompatible with the country's situation, paying attention to the possibilities suitable for our country will facilitate and speed up our peace process. For example, rather than demand for self-administration, ways to ensure perfection by amending or supplementing Tables 2, 3 and 5 is more natural, I suppose.

Our country is a multi-ethnic Union. Any region or state is not inhabited by a single ethnic group. Various nationalities live across the country. The only difference is that they are less or many in number. This is a natural phenomenon. Based on the objective conditions, we can know what consequences we will

face if a law is promulgated for a single region, state or race.

Moreover, there are some citizens in the country who are not our ethnics. Despite differences in the fundamental rights for ethnic people and citizens, it can be seen that all are making collective efforts in the interests of the country with a spirit of Myanmar.

Tatmadaw members are serving the interests of the country and the people by shouldering military duties. Tatmadaw is the fence of our country. Only if the fence is strong enough, will State peace and stability prevail. With peace and stability, all national people and citizens will have no problem with their living conditions. Today's actual need is to improve social economy of the people with increasing demand so as to increase income through goods from the products manufactured by genuine labour of the citizens. For these conditions, Tatmadaw is carrying out national defence and security duties as well as cooperating with the true wish. We will continue to perform our duties conscientiously in the interests of the country and the people.

I would like to conclude by saying that we all have to continue our peace journey with new strength and invigorated spirit, reminiscing the landmark of being able to sign the NCA in our peace history.

In national building efforts, we need to replace the old and outdated ideas with new and updated ones.

In building a Union based on democracy and federalism, we will be able to achieve eternal peace promptly if we try hard with Union spirit and the true wish of seeing peace.

Thank you all

Tatmadaw rescues police constable abducted by AA

A search and rescue column of Tatmadaw founded Police Constable Sai Naing Aung near Kyauktan village in Rakhine State, according to the report of Office of Commander in Chief.

He was one of the abductees taken AA armed group on 26 October.

The police constable and the released abductees said that a Tatmadaw officer purchased a ticket for Shwenadi Watercraft from Sittway to Buthidaung, mentioning his name and military rank. The information about a military officer

in the passengers was released and AA armed group stopped the vessel near Yemyat village.

They called the name of that military officer and took him and some passengers. The AA members also used three motorboats to bring the remaining passengers, heading to Kyauktan village.

While some members of AA group and passengers were awaiting vessels on the bank, the five abductees, including Police Constable Sai Naing Aung, were tied and shot by small weapons before drop-

ping into water. The police constable was floating in the water with a gun injury before he was found by the search and rescue column of Tatmadaw.

Tatmadaw used helicopters and ground units to find the abductees, and 15 of them have been rescued until now. Shwenadi Watercraft line is under investigation for the information release about passengers and the Tatmadaw search and rescue columns are finding more abductees.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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Dated: 29th October 2019

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Japan, S Korea weigh creation of fund amid spat over wartime labor

TOKYO — Japan and South Korea have begun exploring ways to resolve their months-long spat over compensation for wartime labor, with the creation of a fund to provide money for economic cooperation as an option, sources familiar with bilateral ties said Monday.

The idea being floated is for the government and companies in South Korea to set up a fund. Japanese companies will chip in money so it can be used under the name of economic cooperation, not as compensation for wartime labor, the sources said.

Such an agreement would allow Japanese firms to provide money to the South Korean side without contradicting Tokyo's stance that the issue of compensation was settled finally and completely under a 1965 bilateral accord.

The Japanese government does not plan to make monetary contributions, according to the

sources.

Since a series of South Korean court rulings ordered Japanese companies last year to compensate for wartime forced labor during the 1910-1945 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula, the Asian neighbors have failed to bridge their gap and let their relationship sharply worsen. The dispute has spread to trade and security issues in recent months.

When Japan and South Korea reached the 1965 agreement, Tokyo provided Seoul with \$500 million for "economic cooperation." Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has been repeatedly urging Seoul to follow through on the accord that paved the way for the normalization of diplomatic relations.

The South Korean top court said the right of victims of forced mobilization under Japan's "illegal" colonial rule to seek compensation was not terminated by the accord.—Kyodo News ■

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Union energy minister departs for Singapore to attend Int'l Energy Week

UNION MINISTER for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing led a delegation to Singapore yesterday to attend the 12th Singapore International Energy Week (SIEW) from 29 October to 1 November.

SIEW will include Singapore Energy Summit, Singapore International Energy Agency Forum, SIEW Energy Insights, Asia Clean

Energy Summit, Asia Downstream, Gas Asia Summit Conference and Exhibition. Regional Energy Ministers, experts, lecturers, and international energy organizations will be present throughout the energy week to discuss global energy matters. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Union Minister U Win Khaing seen off by officials at the airport before departs for Singapore. PHOTO: MNA

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3rd polio case confirmed in Philippines

MANILA — The Philippines reported on Monday that a 4-year-old girl from a town in southern Manguindanao province has tested positive for the polio virus, the third polio case in the country since September.

Philippine Health Secretary Francisco Duque said the patient from DatuPiang town was initially reported as a case of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) in September, after seeking consultation at a local provincial hospital.

“Presenting signs and symptoms were fever, diarrhea, vomiting and muscle pain,” he said in a statement.

The Department of Health

(DOH) of the Philippines confirmed in September that polio is re-emerging in the Philippines, 19 years after the country was declared polio-free by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2000. Duque said DOH personnel and representatives from the WHO, and the UN Children’s Fund Unicef were meeting with the town officials to discuss the outbreak response.

Duque said at the time that DOH has declared an “epidemic” or “outbreak” after the department found the disease in a 3-year-old in Lanaodel Sur province, also in southern Philippines.—Xinhua ■

New tech to preserve cells with lower cost, fewer side effects

BEIJING — Chinese scientists have developed a new low-cost technology for cell cryopreservation, which is expected to bring a breakthrough in cell therapies treating blood diseases and some cancers.

Cell therapy refers to transplanting cells into a patient after in vitro culture in order to repair or replace the damaged tissues or cells in the human body.

The cryopreservation technology, allowing cells to stop metabolism at 80 or 196 degrees Celsius below zero, could preserve their viability and functions for a long time.

During the freezing, DMSO, an organic solvent, is often used to prevent ice crystals from forming in cells as crystals cause cell death, rendering the cells useless for transplant.

However, DMSO is associated with possible toxicity and a range of serious side effects following cell transplantation.

In the new study, researchers from Tianjin University developed the technology based on betaine, a natural zwitterionic molecule, to replace DMSO.

Betaine is rich in microorganisms, plants and animals. Zwitterionic refers to a mole-

cule with two or more functional groups, of which at least one has a positive and one has a negative electrical charge and the net charge of the entire molecule is zero. According to the research published in the journal *Biomacromolecules*, the researchers successfully cryopreserved cartilage cells with a survival efficiency of more than 90 percent.

The recovered cartilage cells maintained normal functionalities with no crystal formation or toxicity, and are expected to be directly used for clinical treatment after cell recovery.—Xinhua ■

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Scenes from 4th Anniversary of NCA in Nay Pyi Taw



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi greets KNU Chairman Saw Mutu Say Poe. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi greets diplomats at the 4th Anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. **PHOTO: MNA**



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing greets a peace negotiator. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chief Ministers and representatives of ethnic armed organizations attend the 4th Anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. **PHOTO: MNA**



Cultural troupe performs 'Truth from Panglong Land' at the 4th Anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. **PHOTO: MNA**



Representatives of ethnic armed organizations attend the 4th Anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. **PHOTO: MNA**



Diplomats attend the 4th Anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. **PHOTO: MNA**

Dissident Bukovsky, who exposed Soviet punitive psychiatry, dies



Vladimir Bukovsky, seen here at a Moscow rally in 2007, spent 12 years in Soviet prisons, forced labour camps and psychiatric hospitals. **PHOTO: AFP**

MOSCOW (Russia) — Vladimir Bukovsky, a prominent dissident and writer who helped expose the Soviet Union's abuse of psychiatry to silence critics, has died in Britain aged 76.

Bukovsky, whose health had been poor in recent years, died after suffering a cardiac arrest in hospital in Cambridge, England on Sunday night, said the Bukovsky Center, a US-based volunteer organisation linked to the dissident.

By the age of 35, Bukovsky had spent 12 years in Soviet prisons, labour camps and psychiatric hospitals as a dissident who openly opposed the regime.

He was one of the first to expose the practice of punitive psychiatry in the USSR.

Soviet medics issued political dissidents with false diagnoses of mental illness and incarcerated them in psychiatric hospitals where they were forced to take strong-acting medicines.

The practice became especially widespread between the mid-1960s and the breakup of the Soviet Union.

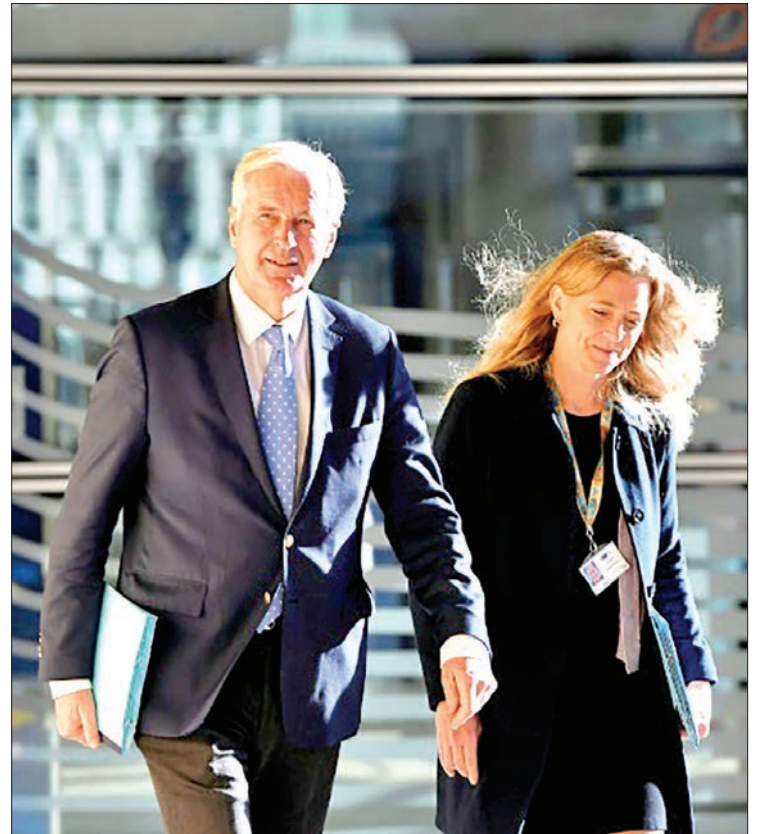
"The Soviet authorities used to call Bukovsky a hooligan involved in anti-Soviet activities," top rights group Memorial said on Twitter. "We call him a hero and say thank you."

Bukovsky first gained prominence as a student activist.

In 1963, he was arrested for possessing forbidden literature. Authorities declared him mentally ill and put him in a psychiatric hospital. He was arrested again in 1967 and sent to a labour camp for three years.

In 1971, he managed to have psychiatric hospital records for six dissidents smuggled to the West, creating an uproar. After another prison sentence, in 1976, he was deported from the USSR and exchanged in Zurich for Luis Corvalan, the head of the Chilean Communist party in a prisoner swap agreed with dictator Augusto Pinochet. He settled in Britain. —AFP ■

EU envoys agree three-month Brexit delay



EU chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier said: 'I'm very happy that a decision has been taken'. **PHOTO: AFP**

BRUSSELS (Belgium) — European Union members agreed Monday to postpone Brexit for up to three months, stepping in with a decision less than 90 hours before Britain was due to crash out with no divorce deal.

The next deadline for departure will be January 31 next year — although the other 27 capitals would allow an earlier date if London ratifies a withdrawal agreement before then.

"The EU27 has agreed that it will accept the UK's request for a Brexitflexion until 31 January 2020," said Donald Tusk, the president of the European Council, which represents member states.

"The decision is expected to be formalised through a written procedure," he said, after ambassadors met in Brussels to

approve the extension.

According to a copy of the agreement seen by AFP, if Prime Minister Boris Johnson convinces the UK parliament to approve an amicable divorce accord before next year, Brexit could be on 30 November or 31 December.

But in the meantime London must nominate a senior official to serve on the next European Commission and must agree that the withdrawal agreement it struck last month will not now be renegotiated, according to the EU text.

A European source said the next step would be for London to formally accept the extension, after which Tusk will ask the EU capitals to sign off on it. "We hope for this to be concluded by Tuesday or Wednesday," he said. —AFP ■

State of emergency declared as California wildfires rage

HEALDSBURG (United States) — California's governor declared a statewide emergency on Sunday as a huge blaze, fanned by strong winds, forced mass evacuations and power blackouts as it bore down on towns in the famed Sonoma wine region.

The so-called Kincade Fire, north of San Francisco, has spread to 30,000 acres (12,000 hectares) and was only 10 per cent

contained by Sunday evening, state fire authorities said.

The blaze, the largest of more than a dozen wildfires burning throughout the state, has destroyed dozens of homes and vineyards, including the renowned 150-year-old Soda Rock Winery. "We've seen the news. We are devastated," the owners said in a Facebook message, adding that all staff at the winery — lo-

cated in the town of Healdsburg, 70 miles north of San Francisco — are safe.

At least two hospitals in Santa Rosa evacuated patients over the weekend to other facilities.

The Kincade Fire — the most devastating in California this year — ignited Wednesday and spread quickly thanks to powerful gusts of up to 90 miles (145 kilometers) per hour. —AFP ■

Essex truck death files sent to Viet Nam for verification

HANOI — British authorities have sent Viet Nam records of four victims among the 39 dead in a refrigerated truck in the British county of Essex for identity verification, the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

"Viet Nam's Ministry of Public Security has received the files for connecting the information and verify the victims' identification," the Vietnam News Agency quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son as saying on Monday.

On the same day, British Ambassador to Viet Nam Gareth Ward held meeting with representatives from the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security to further exchange information regarding the case.

"At this time, we have not received confirmation as to who these people are, and where they are from," the ambassador said in a statement released on Monday, adding that he had discussed with the ministry on how they would work closely together during the

process of victim identification.

Working groups of the Ministry of Public Security have come to central NgheAn and Ha Tinh Province to assess information of the missing cases reported recently and investigate whether they were illegally taken abroad, reported the Vietnam News Agency.

As of Monday, 24 families from the two provinces — 14 from NgheAn and 10 from Ha Tinh — have reported their relatives missing in Britain and Europe fol-

lowing the Essex lorry incident, according to *ThanhNien* (Young People) newspaper.

Police of the two provinces have taken hair and nail samples from families who reported missing members feared to be among the deceased 39 for verification purposes.

Thirty-nine bodies, including eight women and 31 men, were found on 23 October in a refrigerated lorry container traveling to Britain from the Belgian port of Zeebrugge.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc has requested the country's Ministry of Public Security, in collaboration with other government agencies and provincial authorities of NgheAn and Ha Tinh, to urgently verify information and investigate cases of illegally taking Vietnamese nationals abroad. He also asked the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry to closely monitor the situation and work with relevant British agencies to confirm the victims' identity. —Xinhua ■

AFC U-19 Women's Championship 2019: Japan drubs Myanmar 5-0

THE Myanmar U-19 women's football team suffered a 0-5 loss against the Japan U-19 at the AFC U-19 Women's Championship 2019 in the opening match for Group B yesterday at the IPE Chonburi Stadium, Thailand.

Myanmar lined up with goalkeeper Zu Latt Nadi, Naw Htet Htet Wai, Nant Zu Zu Htet, Pont Pont Pyae Maung, May Phu Ko, Captain San Thaw Thaw, Nwe Ni Win, Lin Myint Mo, Moe Ma Ma Soe, Myat Noe Khin, and Phyu Phyu Win.

The team was led by head coach Daw Thet Thet Win.

Team Japan, a world class team, used the 4-4-2 formation as usual, while Myanmar relied on their defense and middle-field style with a 4-1-4-1 set formation.

Japan forced the play from the start and Myanmar did their utmost to breach Japan's strong defense line.

Japan found it hard to make



Myanmar striker Nwe Ni Win (No. 10) vies for the ball with Japan's Captain Takahashi (No. 4) during the opening match for Group B yesterday for the AFF Women's Championship 2019 at IPE Stadium, Chonburi, Thailand. **PHOTO:AFC**

any early goals due to the massive defense put up by Myanmar. Finally, an error by Myanmar's

defense helped Yuzuki Yamamoto score the first goal for Japan. Three minutes later, Har-

uka Osawa scored the second goal for Japan with a close range shot, and the first half

ended with a score of 2-0 in favor of Japan.

In spite of the two-goal lead, Japan did not reduce their turbo play in the second half.

Yuzuki Yamamoto netted one more goal for the team, assisted by teammate Haruka Miura.

Japan made their fourth goal at 66 minutes with Maho Hirosawa's sublime strike from outside the box over an assist from teammate Osawa.

Before Myanmar could recover, Sara Ito took advantage of their rattled defense line to score the fifth goal for Japan at 67 minutes.

Myanmar managed to block any more goal attempts, and the match ended with a 5-0 win for Japan.

Myanmar will next play against China on 31 October at the IPE Chonburi Stadium, while Japan will face South Korea the same day at the stadium.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)■

Myanmar national women's team to play friendly matches in China

IN preparation for the upcoming 2019 South East Asian Games, the Myanmar national women's football team will play friendly matches and undergo training in China for eight days, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

Team Myanmar will leave for China on 8 November and during their stay, the team will play friendly matches against Chinese women football teams.

Team Myanmar will be led by head coach U Win Thu Moe for the training sessions and friendly matches in China.

Team Myanmar will play a friendly match against the Jiangsu Suning Women's F.C., and two friendly matches against China Women's Youth Selection

Team, said a source with the MFF.

After their training tour, team Myanmar will focus on the SEA Games women's football event, for which Myanmar has been placed in Group A along with Malaysia and host Philippines.

Myanmar will take on the Philippines on 26 November in the opening match of the women's football competition at the SEA Games. The competition will be held from 26 November to 9 December at the Biñan Football Stadium in Biñan, Laguna, the Philippines. — Lynn Thit (Tgi)■

Football players from the Myanmar national women's team train in Yangon ahead of friendly matches in China and the 2019 SEA Games. **PHOTO:MFF**



Egyptian star Mohamed Salah's left ankle is fine says Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp. **PHOTO: AFP**

Salah's ankle nothing to worry about, says Klopp

LONDON (United Kingdom)— Jurgen Klopp moved to allay fears over Mohamed Salah's left ankle problem saying his departure five minutes before the end of Premier League leaders Liverpool's 2-1 win over Tottenham Hotspur was a precautionary measure.

The 27-year-old Egyptian star — who had missed the previous match

with Manchester United due to the injury — scored the decisive goal to bring up his half century of goals at Anfield.

Salah, who reached the landmark in 58 matches with only Roger Hunt getting there faster, has a few days to rest up before Saturday's away game at Aston Villa as he was highly unlikely

to feature in Wednesday's League Cup clash with Arsenal.

"It's the ankle, the ankle he has struggled with since the Leicester game," said Klopp.

"It's good but the longer the game goes the muscles get a bit tired, stuff like this, (and) if you get a knock on it then you feel it more.—AFP■