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The Bogyoke Aung San Bridge that connects Mawlamyine in Mon State and Chaungzone on the Bilugyun island. **PHOTO: MIZZIMA**

Bogyoke Aung San Bridge inaugurated

THE inauguration ceremony of the Bridge Museum and the Bogyoke Aung San Bridge linking Mawlamyine and Chaungzone townships was held yesterday morning at a pandal on the Mawlamyine side in Mon State with an opening address by U Win Myint, Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw.

The span across the Thanl-

win river is especially important for Chaungzone Township on the Bilugyun island, a large, major island that, until this bridge was built, was accessible only by boat.

"The bridge is the one spanning Bilugyun, a well-known island and isolated previously and Mawlamyine crossing the mouth of the sea, which is a part

of the Gulf of Mottama/ Gulf of Martaban. Bilugyun island has a population of over 120,000, 858 square kilometers in area", said U Win Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw. "It is bigger than Singapore. With better transportation, the industries and businesses of local people will develop, creating more job opportunities for local people with

upgraded socio-economic lives. And the region will also gain better education and healthcare. With the added convenience of communication not only for locals and but also for the whole nation, friendship between national brethren and union spirit will develop.

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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Second work coordination meeting of National Road Safety Council

THE SECOND work coordination meeting of National Road Safety Council (NRSC) was held yesterday morning in the Ministry of Transport and Communications meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw and was attended by the NRSC Chairman Vice President U Henry Van Thio, NRCS Vice Chairmen Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe and U Thant Sin Maung, Union Ministers U Ohn Win, Dr. Myint Htwe, Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo, Mayors of Mandalay, Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Committee on Transport, Communication & Construction, officials from Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry and Myanmar Engineering Society, Deputy Ministers, secretaries of NRSC sub-committees and officials.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio said today's meeting was held to review the implementation of National Road Safety Action (2014-2020) and formulate future processes for success. Programs need to be drawn up and implemented to reduce road accident and fatalities first and totally eliminated later on to achieve road safety and will be successful only with the cooperation of the people. Threats to road safety are huge and increasing and the world is putting great emphasis on road



Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses the 2nd work coordination meeting of National Road Safety Council-NRSC in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

safety to contain these threats. In Myanmar, the National Road Safety Action Plan (2014-2020) has been drawn and implemented.

Next, the Vice President added that the implementation of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 is based on the five processes of supervising road safety, safer roads and vehicle movement, safer vehicles, safer road users and quick response to road accidents.

For the success of these processes, there is a need to train and educate road users, enact vehicle and traffic rules and providing encouragement, inspecting and taking action to obey the rules.

There also is a need to inspect the vehicle usage, maintenance and installation of safety measures while proper design of roads, laying roads up to standard and regular road maintenance are required to be done without fail.

Furthermore, Road Safety Councils for Nay Pyi Taw Council, States and Regions were formed and Road Safety Task Forces were also formed to coordinate the processes in the Action Plan. Those attending the meeting were urged to study the explanations given, discuss and suggest together with new ideas, new plans and new ways of thinking in order to formulate work pro-

cesses – that are relevant to the prevailing situation of the country – and could be implemented effectively and speedily. Departments, organizations and officials that have the main responsibility for Road Safety need to cooperate earnestly. National Road Safety will succeed only with the cooperation of the people and the people must be educated and persuaded for their active cooperation.

Afterwards NRSC Vice Chairman Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe explained about national road safety matters and NRSC Vice Chairman Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung explained about 2016 work processes of NRSC.

Management sub-committee, education, inspection and enforcement sub-committee, research and health sub-committee and financial sub-committee secretaries then explained about implementation of the first meeting's decisions. Road Safety Council Chairmen of Nay Pyi Taw Council, States and Regions then explained about work done on road safety and implementing status of the work processes.

Next, NRSC secretary Road Transport Administration Department Director General U Zaw Min Oo explained about the implementing processes, implementing departments and organizations on the suggestions in Suu Foundation Report and the findings of the workshop jointly held by Suu Foundation and Ministry of Transport and Communications.

Those attending the meeting discussed in general on national safety matters to which the Vice President provided additional discussions. Vice President U Henry Van Thio added further to urge for establishing financial regulations to set up and properly utilize a Road Safety Fund and relevant sub-committee and ministries to cooperate and implement the road safety education of basic education level students. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Ambassador Mr Tateshi Higuchi and U Maung Maung Win exchange notes after signing the grant aid. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Japan grants ¥ 610 million for HRD Scholarship

Mr. Tateshi HIGUCHI, Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar; and U Maung Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance, exchanged notes regarding concerning grant aid for "the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship" worth 610 million Japanese Yen (approximately 5.4 million USD) in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday.

The scholarship provides an

opportunity for young Myanmar leaders from the public and private sectors to obtain Masters Degree (or) Doctoral Degree in Japan to learn necessary skills and knowledge for problem solving and policy making with a view to promoting Myanmar's social and economic development as well as to establishing friendly relationship between Japan and Myanmar. —GNLM ■

Union Minister for Information receives diplomats, media agencies

Dr. Pe Myint, Union Minister for Information, yesterday received separately Mr. Tateshi Higuchi, Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar; Mr. Chen Chen, Chargé d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar; U Min Banyar Sann, CEO of Hinthar Media Corporation and U Aung Zaw, Chief Editor of The Irrawaddy at the ministry's hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting with the Japanese ambassador, they discussed broadcast media investment, continuous cooperation with Shanti Volunteers to increase the number of mobile libraries, and the Machine Translation Project, which is being implemented by the Ministry of Information and the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT) in Japan.

While meeting with Mr Chen



Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint holds talks with Japanese Ambassador Mr Tateshi Higuchi. **PHOTO: MNA**

Chen, they discussed the China-Myanmar relationship and cooperation in strengthening the media sector; and the opening of an office for the People's Daily newspaper in Yangon. The Union Minister discussed with U Min Banyar Sann, CEO of Hinthar

Media Corporation, the shooting of a documentary film of General Aung San. The Minister also met with U Aung Zaw, Chief Editor of The Irrawaddy, for an open discussion about the investment of the digital media sector. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Myanmar citizens in Britain at the Landmark Hotel in London. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor meets with Myanmar citizens in Britain

STATE COUNSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met with Myanmar citizens in Britain at the Landmark Hotel in London at 10 am LST on May 9.

In the meeting, the State Counsellor said, “We regard all Myanmar citizens and all those who had been born in Myanmar to be the same without any discrimination as family members. Our country has started to move towards the democratic system, not reaching full democracy yet but moving towards it step by step. All the citizens are responsible for gaining full democracy. In making the nation develop, a government or an organization or a person alone cannot do the job. The whole populace must take part in it.

We will work hard for our



State Counsellor delivers speech at the Landmark Hotel. PHOTO: MNA

nation to be peaceful, stable and developed.”

The State Counsellor added, “The most important thing for our country is peace and national reconciliation. Without peace,

we cannot achieve genuine and long-lasting development. We have already had quantity, so we must try hard to achieve quality. We must try hard to have intellect and character.

Our new government practices loving kindness and loyalty towards the people.

As Myanmar citizens, you should educate your offspring to know Myanmar culture and Myanmar language, though you are living apart from your mother country. If you wish to help Myanmar, you must know the basics of Myanmar culture and have respect for our own culture.”

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and Myanmar citizens in Britain posed for documentary photos.— Myanmar News Agency ■

State Counsellor meets with UK Officials

ON 8 May local standard time 3:30 p.m. the State Counsellor met with Mr. Alok Sharma, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office at Dorchester Hotel, London and discussed matters relating to the national reconciliation and peace process in Myanmar, Rakhine State and improving the professional qualifications of the Myanmar Police force.

Similarly, on 8 May local standard time 4 p.m. the State Counsellor met with Mr. Rory Stewart, Minister of State, Department for International Development to exchange views and discuss matters relating to Britain’s assistance to Myanmar’s development efforts and Myanmar-Britain cooperation on developing the education, health and electrical power sectors. — Myanmar News Agency ■



State Counsellor shakes hands with Mr. Alok Sharma at Dorchester Hotel in London. PHOTO: MNA

Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong work committee meetings conclude

By Thura Zaw (MNA)

Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong work committee meetings held in designated places were concluded yesterday afternoon at Nay Pyi Taw National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and were attended by work committees’ members from the government group, ethnic armed group and election winning political parties group.

Basic principles

Political affairs work committee meeting continue at the assigned place where U Khin Zaw Oo and Dr. Hlan Mhon Zarkhon led the discussion and Brig-Gen Tin Aung, Lt-Col Win Myaing on behalf of Brig-Gen Hla Than Maung, U Htay Win Aung, U Aung Lwin Oo, Dr. Sai



Participants at yesterday meeting in Nay Pyi Taw discussing topics concerning economic sectors. PHOTO: MNA

Oo, Saw L Kio Say, Saw San Nyein Thu, Saw Kuu Ku, U Zam Zamone, Sai Bho Aung, Dr. Tu Ja and U Aung Kyi Nyunt attended and continue the discussion on political basic principles.

Selection

In the work committee on economic affairs, U Hla Maung

Shwe and Min Kyaw Zayar Oo led the meeting and Brig-Gen Thaik Soe, Mi Kon Cham, Salai Hta Lar Hay, Pado Saw Tar Do Mu, Sai Hlan, Khun Tin Shwe Oo, U Tun Naing, U Thein Tun and U Marcos hold discussion to select from 8 papers on economic matter the policy matters to be sub-

mitted to Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC).

Discussion continue

Similarly, at the work committee on social affairs, U Zaw Htay, U Sai La and U Naing Ngan Lin led the meeting and Maj-Gen Nay Lin, Daw Zin Mar Aung, U Naing Swe Oo, Dr. San San Aye, Saw Sel Bwe, Khun Thomas, Daw Aye Thida Myint, U Tin Swe, U Sam Saung Kar and U Shwe Min continue the discussion on the papers submitted by Kayin State and Pa’O Self-administered Zone.

Security affairs

At the work committee on security affairs, U Myo Win and U Tar Hla Pe led the meeting and Maj-Gen Tin Maung Win, Brig-Gen Sein Tun Hla, U In Hton Khar Naw Hsan, U Kyaw

Kyaw Han, Pado Saw Tar Mu Lar, Puu Htet Ni, Khun Okka, Dr. Aung Myat Oo, U Saw Tun Aung Myint, U Myint Naing and Daw Nan Khin Sein Myint continue the discussion on defense affairs basic policy under the title of national defense matters.

Federal system

At the same time, the work committee on land and natural environmental affairs, U Aung Soe and Khun Myint Tun led the discussion and Brig-Gen Aung Thein Oo, U Soe Win, U Zaw Min Latt, Dr. Wah Wah Maung, U Sonny, Saw Daniel, Daw Dwe Bu, U Hla Khaing, Khun Tun Shwe and U Eik Hsaw discussed land policies related to federal system. The secretariat meetings of the UPDJC will start on 10 May. ■

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

Korea-Myanmar Friendship Bridge (Dala) to be built in January 2018

The Korea-Myanmar Friendship Bridge (Dala) will begin construction in January 2018 and is expected to be completed in 2021, it is learnt.

The regional government held a meeting with Hluttaw representatives, officials from the Ministry of Construction, Myanma Port Authority and private port management operators on 4 May 2017. At the meeting, they discussed the Korea-Myanmar Friendship Bridge (Dala) project which will connect downtown Yangon with Dala Township.

The regional government and departmental officials approved construction of the Yangon-Dala river crossing bridge with the original bridge design of 49



Commuters use small boats to travel to and from Dala but the construction of the bridge may make travelling easier. **PHOTO: MYANMA ALINN**

meters in height. The bridge will connect Phone Gyi Street in Lanmadaw with Dala. The Yangon-Dala river crossing bridge will be built with an aim to enable the local people in Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu and Kung-

yangon and Ayeyawady Region to travel smoothly and quickly in and out of their regions, said Dr. Sein Mya Aye, Pyithu Hluttaw representative for Dala Township constituency.

The ministry of construction

selected the consultancy companies on December 2016 for the design and paid compensation to the locals from April 2016 to February 2017. The ministry will also choose the companies to construct the bridge from October to December 2017.

The project is expected to cost US\$168.173 million. Out of this amount, US\$137.833 million will be funded through a loan from Korean's Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) and the Ministry of Construction will incur the remaining amount of US\$30.341 million. Upon completion of the bridge, it will contribute to socio-economic development of the local people from Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu and Kungyangon and Ayeyawady regions.—MMAL ■

Foreigners can apply for permanent residency

The Myanmar government is making arrangements to enable foreigners to apply for permanent residency at Myanmar embassies abroad, according to U Myint Kyaing, the Permanent Secretary for Ministry

of Labour, Immigration and Population.

Previously, foreigners had to apply for permanent residency at the immigration branch offices in Yangon, which was a financial burden

for some. When foreigners apply for permanent residency in Myanmar, they have to pay an application fee of US\$500 to the embassy concerned.

From January 2015 to March 2016, 188 foreigners

applied for permanent residency and 143 foreigners were approved. Currently, 55 foreigners have applied for permanent residency, of which only 28 will be granted, it has been learnt.—200 ■

Souvenirs made of dry coconut in high demand

The market for sculptures made from dry coconut is in high demand in local and foreign markets, according to a souvenir shop from Bogyoke Aung San Market in Yangon.

A coconut based item will

not sell more than Ks1,000 locally but dry coconut sculptures may fetch from ten to a hundred thousand kyats.

At present, demand of dry coconut sculptures is higher by 40pc than that of last year in

both local and foreign markets.

Coconut sculptures were sold and exported to foreign markets via the souvenir shops in local markets and are used as decoration in hotels and restaurants for their places to be

attractive.

The thick husk fiber of coconuts and tools including sharp knife, spike and small iron brush were mainly utilized to make the coconut sculptures.—200 ■

Two accidents in an hour on Ygn-Mdy Highway



Mitsubishi Pajero dented after diving into the ravine on the right side of the Yangon-Mandalay highway. **PHOTO: MPF**

A Mitsubishi Pajero en route from Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon driven by Ma Ni Ni Htwe overturned and dived into the ravine on the right side of the road at 9:30 am yesterday between mileposts 195/0 and 195/1 on Yangon-Mandalay Highway when she lost control.

Out of three women including the driver as well as a monk, two women succumbed to the injuries in the accident. The driver and the monk were injured but not seriously. The injured victims and the bodies were taken by Magway Highway police to 1000-bed Nay Pyi Taw General

Hospital.

Similarly, a light truck driven by Tun Naing Oo overturned after hitting the road divider when he dozed at the wheel between mileposts 332/5 and 332/6 at 10:05 am on the same day.

A total of ten passengers inclusive of five monks, four men and a woman. Three of the monks were injured but not seriously. The injured passengers were taken by Saga-inn Highway police to Tada-U hospital.

The reckless drivers have been charged by respective Police Stations.—Nyi Nyi Thant (Nay Pyi Taw) ■

Seven tea leaf factories under construction in Shan State

Seven dried tea leaf factories are reportedly under construction with the technical assistance of German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) in Shan State.

After organic farming, the dried tea leaves produced by a factory from Pindaya Township will be exported to Germany, according to Pindaya tea-leaf group.

Myanmar exported 76 tonnes of dried tea leaf worth nearly US\$24,000 to China through Muse 105th Mile trade zone from 22nd to 28th April. The export volume was up by over 29 tonnes compared to that of last week. About 150 tonnes of dried tea-leaf were exported to China in April through Muse, according to the news of Commerce Ministry.

In the similar period, nearly 46 tonnes of dried tea leaf worth nearly US\$18,000 were shipped to Thailand via Tachilek. Over 80 tonnes of dried leaf flowed into Thailand market through Tachilek in April.

The fresh tea leaves are mostly for domestic consumption but the tea associations are making concerted efforts to get access to more international markets. About two tonnes of fresh tea leaves have been exported to Germany.

Myanmar's tea leaf is to Eu-



Workers work in tea leaf field at Mong Mao. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

ropean consumers' taste due to its organic farming. However, the production rate is low and the price is still on the rise due to high production costs, it is learnt.

Three are over 200,000 acres of tea leaf plantations across the nation and the tea leaves are mostly cultivated in Northern, Southern and Eastern Shan State.—Htet Myat ■

China merchants slash the demand of sugar

CHINESE merchants slashed the demand of sugar on account of the confiscation by China's government.

Sugar is legally allowed to export by Myanmar government whereas there is no legitimate permit from Yunnan Provincial government.

With a pile of complaints from China's local sugar producers, China's government is reportedly planning to levy anti-dumping duty on imported sugar, according to the news of Commerce Ministry.

The producers engaged in food chain including sugar are concerned about the possibly high price. The China authorities are strictly enforcing the sugar import.

Previously, about 80,000

bags of sugar flowed into China market a day. However, around 20,000 bags of sugar are currently exported to China a day through border trade camp amid China's confiscation.

Sugar is imported mostly from sugar producing countries like Thailand and India, and Myanmar re-exported them to China because Myanmar sugar millers are able to produce sugar mainly for the domestic market as Myanmar sugar does not look appealing and not meet export criteria for the lack of advanced refining machinery.

Starting from Fiscal Year 2015-2016 to the first week of March in the current FY 2016-2017, over 2.3million tonnes of sugar were reportedly re-exported to the foreign partners,

earning US\$1,290million.

Myanmar is making efforts to enhance re-export trade and grant permits for more items, negotiating with the departments concerned. Sugar, betel nut, fuel oil, clothes, garlic, sesame seeds, dried pepper, peanut, cotton, electrical appliances, beverages, food, edible oil, tyre are re-exported.

The country earns more revenues from re-export trade with the increase in trade volume. In addition, all the stakeholders in this industry are financially doing well, it is learnt.

The Commerce Ministry will also verify and approve the proposals concerning the commodities which can be re-exported, it is learnt.—Ko Htet ■

Build Tech Yangon 2017 on 18-20 May

BUILD Tech Yangon 2017, the leading building technology and supply event, will take place this month in the commercial capital of Yangon with a focus on showcasing cutting-edge technologies and products to address the growing needs for the construction industry.

With a focus on infrastructure, residential and commercial buildings, transportation, manufacturing and trading, the 4th edition of Build Tech Yangon is the leading platform serving the construction development of the city.

Jointly organised by the Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs and Singapore-based

Sphere Exhibits, the new event is due to be held at the Myanmar Convention Center, Mindhamma Road, Yangon, from 18 May through 20 May.

Latest engineering machineries as well as state-of-the-art technologies and solutions for the building and construction sector will be exhibited by top construction companies from China, India, Italy, Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, South Korea and Thailand. The trade event will include a green building conference to share green building techniques and knowledge with the audience for the purpose of developing the country's growing construction industry.—200 ■

Enterprises proposed under old investment law soon to be completely scrutinized

FIFTY two enterprises which have been submitted under old investment law as of 31st Dec 2016 are under scrutiny, according to Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

Thirty two foreign enterprises with investments of US\$1.5billion and 20 domestic proposals with investments of US\$492billion remain to be proceeded, said U Aung Naing Oo, the secretary of MIC.

MIC received the investment proposals submitted under old investment law by 31st Dec 2016. We will make sure to complete the scrutiny soon, he said.

New Myanmar Investment Law was enacted on 18th Oct

2016 and bylaws were passed on 30th March 2017. MIC has already announced the designation of specific investment zone areas, the sectors which will be highlighted for investment promotion and the restricted investment businesses.

The FDI flowing into the country in the previous FY 2016-2017 hit over US\$6.8billion which exceeded the expectation of US\$6billion, mostly into industrial manufacturing and transport and communication sectors. Foreign direct investment (FDI) of over US\$6billion is likely to flow into the country this Fiscal Year 2017-2018, according to the DICA.—Ko Htet ■

Rubber prices suffer sharp decline

Rubber prices dropped to about Ks800 per pound these days, according to the rubber producers.

A pound of rubber fetched up to over Ks1,300 earlier this year. The rubber price was on the rise in March and but turned to a downward trend after the Thingyan Festival, in keeping with the international rubber price. Rubber producers did not expect this steep decline, causing difficulties for the rubber businessmen and labourers, it is reported.

Rubber is mainly exported to China. During this year, the rubber prices hit a high of Ks1,200 to

Ks1,300 per pound. As a result of the appealing price, rubber growers who were forced to suspend their businesses due to the low price resumed their enterprises this year. During last Fiscal Year 2016-2017, rubber plants were planted on 155,5000 acres of rubber in Ye Township, 81,000 acres in Kyaikmaraw, 70,100 acres in Thanbyuzayat, 60,000 acres in Mudon, 35,000 acres in Kyaikto, 45,000 acres in Thaton, 21,200 acres in Bilin, 17,000 acres in Paung, 2,225 acres in Mawlamyine and 5,926 acres in Chaungzon in Mon State. —Ko Htet ■

Bogyoke Aung San Bridge inaugurated

FROM PAGE-1

To strengthen union spirit more than ever, and to honour and remind us of Bogyoke Aung San, architect of Independence and national leader, the bridge was named after him. It is reasonable to do so. As known by all, in other countries of the world as well, national heroes and leaders who sacrificed themselves for their countries and people are honoured by recording in such a way. In India, our neighboring country, there were bridges named after Mahatma Gandhi, national patriot."

U Win Myint added, "Just by hearing or seeing Bogyoke Aung San's name, it will arouse union spirit, beget unity, cause patriotism, encourage people to imitate his honesty and straightforwardness and to emulate his sacrifices. Bogyoke Aung San is our benefactor who sacrificed his life without having a hint of exploiting others and brought independence for the country. In recognition of these and with a view to looking forward for the future of the country, Pyithu Hluttaw representatives put forward a motion, seconded it and made a decision. For these, we congratulate our representatives. Bogyoke Aung San managed to achieve



The inauguration ceremony of the Bogyoke Aung San Bridge that connects Mawlamyine in Mon State and Chaungzone on the Bilugyun Island. **PHOTO: IPRD**

matters on building up a federal union, acquisition of rights for nationals to self-administer and equal rights through the Panglong Agreement. Hence, as long as we hear and see Bogyoke Aung San's name, it will remind us of the democratic policy laid down by Bogyoke Aung San, a federal democratic Union which Bogyoke Aung San wanted to build up, self-administration which Bogyoke Aung San wanted to bring about, acquisition of equality which Bogyoke Aung San wanted to give. I want our brethren to understand that it was aimed

at prioritising the affairs of national people so as not to forget the affairs of federal union and democracy."

"On such an occasion, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, who is the daughter of Bogyoke Aung San, has been leading to implement the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong for bringing about policy, principles and objectives laid down by Bogyoke Aung San, building up the federal democratic union and peace long-hoped for by our national brethren. On such a favorable occasion, Bo-

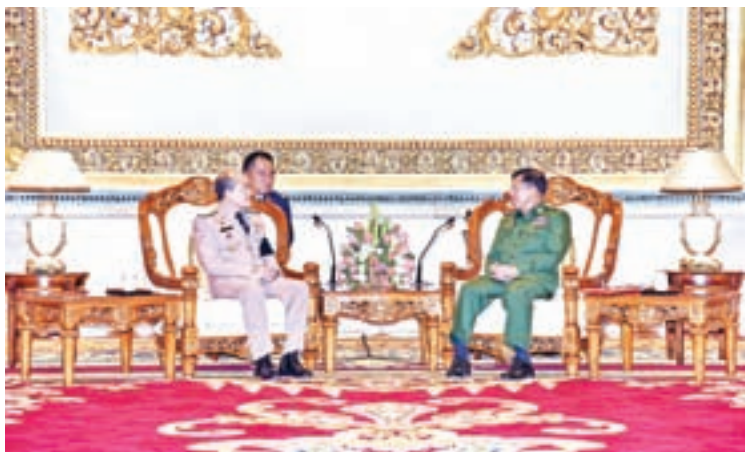
gyoke Aung San's name, which represents all nationals and was respected by the world, was used. Honouring the one who deserves respect is a way of reciprocating our gratitude toward him and it is in accord with auspiciousness — Mingalar. So later, names for bridges for people to use should be named after rivers, regions, national heroes and leaders. I hereby urge our national brethren to friendly co-operate, based on union spirit and make concerted efforts to build up a federal democratic union and bring about internal peace."

The naming of the bridge after Bogyoke Aung San drew criticism and petitions from residents of Mon State and other regions.

The bridge becomes the 9th span over the Thanlwin River and the 2nd for Mon State. The landmark bridge connecting Mawlamyine and Bilugyun region would boost the socio-economy of the area as the businesses, including hotels, tourism and production businesses, will flourish, thanks to better communication and transportation, said Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing. The bridge was formally opened by Chief Minister of Mon State Dr Aye Zan, Amyotha Hluttaw MP Daw Myat Thidar Tun, Amyotha Hluttaw MP U Lin Tin Htay, Pyithu Hluttaw MP Daw Mar Mar Khaing, Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Tin Ko Ko Oo, Director of the Construction Group-4 (Bridge) U Thein Myint Mon.

Bogyoke Aung San Bridge is about a mile long and was built by Myanmar engineers with the use of international construction techniques.

Following the opening ceremony, Bogyoke Aung San Bridge (Balukyun) Museum was also inaugurated with the presence of MPs and governmental officials.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with the Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy, Admiral Na Arreenich. **PHOTO: MNA**

SG Min Aung Hlaing receives Royal Thai Navy Chief

COMMANDER-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday received the Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy, Admiral Na Arreenich, at Zayyarthiyei Beikhma hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed cooperation in security in the two country's marine territories, sharing experience

in difficult tasks, preventing illegal businesses using the two countries marine territories, collaboration against drug trading on waterways, working together on the issue of boat people, violence prevention cases, training courses for language, navy medicine and holding goodwill sports events.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Entrance fee to Shwedagon Pagoda to increase

By Ko Moe

THE trustee board for the Shwedagon Pagoda announced a rise in the entrance fee for foreigners to Ks10,000, an increase of Ks2,000.

"We will collect Ks10,000 for one foreigner as an entrance fee starting from 1 June. We already have approval from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism," said U Win Kyaing, deputy head of the department for the Shwedagon Pagoda trustee of-

fice, adding that they are working to provide better services with the increase.

Last month, more than 31,000 tourists visited Shwedagon Pagoda and more than 250,000 visitors had visited the pagoda from January to April, 2017.

"Due to the hot weather in April, few visitors came to the pagoda. There were 1,300 visitors a day on average. There were much more visitors in January, February and March,"

said U Win Kyaing.

The current entrance fee for a foreign visitor of Ks8,000 has been collected since April, 2016. "Mya Pagoda in Thailand and Angkorwat in Cambodia have much higher entrance fees than here," said U Win Kyaing. According to official statistics, most of the visitors to Shwedagon come from the neighboring country of Thailand, with most of the others coming from China and Germany. ■

Dr. Than Myint leaves for Cambodia

Dr. Than Myint, Union Minister for Commerce, left by air for Cambodia yesterday morning and arrived at 8:00 am local standard time to attend the "World Economic

Forum on ASEAN" in Phnom Penh, from 10 to 12 May.

Heads of states from Asia-Pacific regions, ministers of the governments, experts from all individual

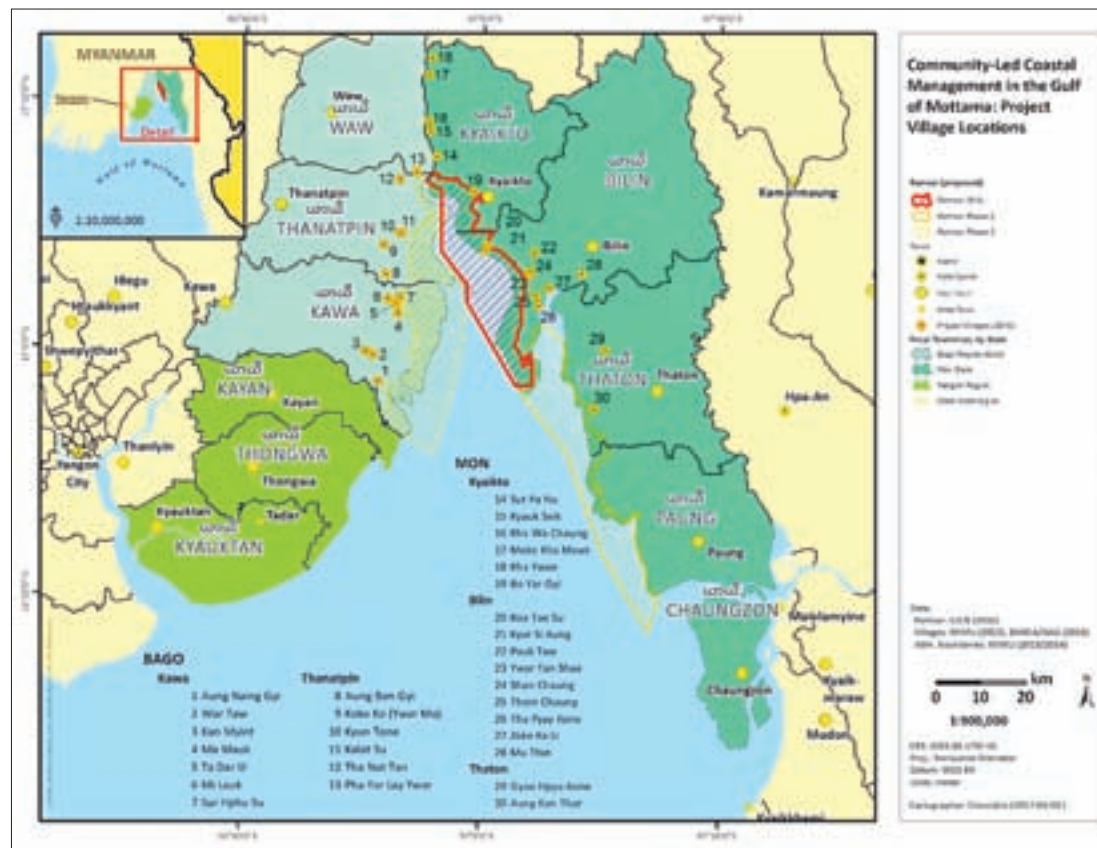
sectors, entrepreneurs, and representatives from social organizations will attend the "World Economic Forum on ASEAN." —Myanmar News Agency ■

Enhancing the conservation of wetlands in Myanmar: the government designates part of the Gulf of Mottama in Mon State as Myanmar's fourth Ramsar site

Myanmar is home to an extraordinary diversity of wetlands, from mountainous wetlands, large freshwater wetlands and lakes to coastal wetlands like mangroves, mudflats, and coral reefs. These ecosystems provide a wide range of food, water supply, flood protection, and other ecosystem goods and services that underpin local livelihoods and the environment.

Despite these benefits, wetlands are under enormous pressure. Globally, according to the Convention on Biological Diversity, 40% of 1,000 wetlands sampled were lost between 1970 and 2008. Research also shows a 76% loss of freshwater species in wetlands between 1980 and 2010. Myanmar's wetlands are also threatened by unsustainable water extraction, agricultural encroachment, over-fishing, and invasive alien species that reduce their capacity to support human development.

To better protect its wetlands, Myanmar ratified the Ramsar Convention in 2005. Established in 1971, the Ramsar Convention, the world's oldest global environmental agreement, is an international treaty for the conservation and wise (sustainable) use of wetlands. Through the convention, and following a set of criteria, countries identify wetlands of "international importance" and designate them as Ramsar sites and commit to ensure their management and sustainable use, jointly with the communities which depend upon them. Globally, over 2,200 wetlands have been nominated as Ramsar sites.



Gulf of Mottama is designated as Ramser Site. PHOTO: FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

In Myanmar, three sites were designated: Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary in Bago Region, the Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary in Kachin State and the Meinmahla Kyun Wildlife Sanctuary in the Ayeyarwady Delta.

On May 10, 2017, the northern part of the Gulf of Mottama was designated as Myanmar's fourth Ramsar site. That day, 10-May is the World Migratory Bird Day too. About 45,000-hectare site stretches from the mouth of the Sittaung River along the eastern shore of the estuary in Kyaukto and Bilin Townships in Mon State. It meets six out of the nine Ramsar criteria, a very high proportion. The Gulf of Mottama is one of the most dynamic estuaries in the world and is

home to among the largest areas of mudflats in the world, making it of outstanding global conservation value.

The gulf's high productivity, fed by sediments and nutrients from three major rivers, supports abundant invertebrates that provide food for up to 150,000 migratory water birds in the non-breeding season. The gulf is one of the world's most important wintering areas for the Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper, hosting probably more than half of the remaining global population in the world during wintering season. The site also supports the livelihoods of tens of thousands of fishers.

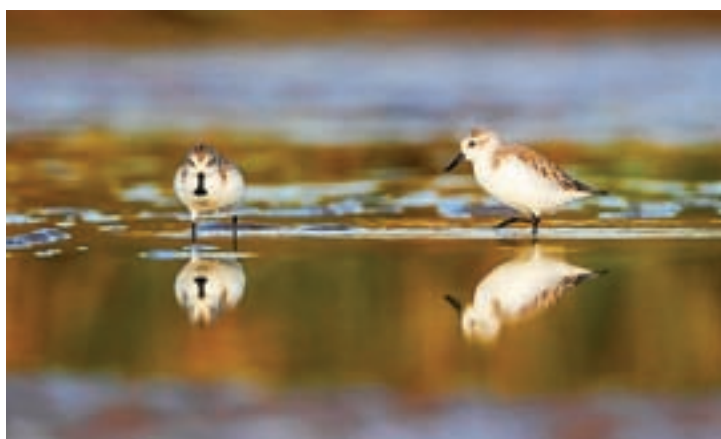
But the Gulf of Mottama is suffering. Fish catch has de-

clined by 50%-90% over the past 10 years, the result of over-fishing, often due to use of illegal nets to harvest fish of all sizes, even juveniles. Small-scale fishers are being forced to look for work in other sectors, or migrate. If no action is taken, fish catch and the coastal economy will decline further. Wintering birds are still threatened by hunting. The site was designated after extensive consultations among local communities, the Mon State government and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) which are implementing "The Community-Led Coastal Management in the Gulf of Mottama Project" funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The project is assisting the

preparation of a management plan for the Gulf of Mottama that incorporates the "wise use" principles of the Ramsar Convention. The designation of this Ramsar site is of special significance because it is the first in Myanmar that is outside a legally designated protected area. It therefore sets an important precedent for Myanmar's many other wetlands of global importance that merit Ramsar status.

"The Ramsar Convention Secretariat is very pleased to see the designation of the eastern edge of the Gulf of Mottama as a "Wetland of International Importance" (or "Ramsar Site"). This site is one of the largest mudflats globally and these ecosystems are being degraded throughout the world through reclamation and development. As a result of this designation, Myanmar has shown their international commitment to conserving those valuable ecosystems and the services that they provide for both people and the environment. We are also pleased to see that local communities are part of the process, considering the importance of the site for local livelihoods," said Lew Young, Senior Advisor for Asia-Oceania at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat.

In celebration of Myanmar's fourth Ramsar site, Mon State Government and IUCN will organize a launch event in Mon State in May 2017. This will be an opportunity to learn more about the importance of those muddy waters.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Endangered species dee doo birds. PHOTO: FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

In Myanmar, three sites were designated: Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary in Bago Region, the Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary in Kachin State and the Meinmahla Kyun Wildlife Sanctuary in the Ayeyarwady Delta.



Endangered species dee doo birds. PHOTO: FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

Youths, outstanding students, doyens and leaders

Khin Maung Oo

To my great delight, these days I saw outstanding students taking recreation at summer vacation camps, in the news-papers. In fact, the outstanding student program was launched by the Socialist government about 50 years ago. It had been in limbo for several decades. It is very welcome news for me, because youths were targeted to be nurtured for the future. Acclaiming someone who deserves acclaim is a kind of auspicious-ness; as is the acclaim given to students who stand out. Youths must gain experience and knowledge as they grow and gain maturity. One day, today's youths will unavoidably have to shoulder the responsibility of the country; hence the need for them to get all-round development. All-round development cannot be acquired all of a sudden. The government, conscious of the fact that schools provide the perfect environment for all-round development, revived the Outstanding Students Program – "Luyechuns" which was on the verge of extinction.

The former Luyechuns (outstanding students), who became older joined the respective government services, some working as professors or well-known medical surgeons, while some joined the Defence services or selected different career paths. They served the country remarkably well. Some disappeared from the world. Most of them are now in their feebleness but they are not yet in their dotage. They can still pass on their knowledge and experiences to the younger generation. Now our country is marching towards a modern, developed Democratic Federal Union. We can get from our old veterans avant-garde ideas of great use for our country. They can share moral lessons to youths and virtuous principles to abide by, throughout their lives. Moral bankruptcy can deprive our citizens, young and old alike of their capacities and capabilities for building a better society based on justice and equality.

The doyens are responsible for helping our elected government to care for our younger generation to become full-fledged future leaders who will shoulder the great burdens of our nation, either by directly joining the campaign which is being implemented by the government or by sharing what they want to say through journals or newspapers. The government alone cannot carry out this tremendous task, so the former Luyechun students whom the then government had great expectations can surely fulfill the need. Never be reluctant to take part in the program of bringing up children of today into able and outstanding citizens of tomorrow. To coin a phrase, "Save our nation's future."



File photo: Buddhist devotees participate in a ceremony to pour water on sacred Maha Bodhi Tree on Fullmoon Kasone at the Shwedagon Pagoda. **PHOTO: THWE THWE TUN**

Text and context of water pouring on Sacred Maha Bodhi Tree on Fullmoon Kasone

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

Pali word Bodhi means omniscience or enlightenment of Buddha. The sacred Bo tree under which Gotama Buddha attained enlightenment was Bo or papal tree [Ficus religiosa] Nyaung Bodhi, Nyaung is Myanmar word for Bannyan tree. Bodhi is Pali word for wisdom or enlightenment. Bodhisatva means Buddha-to-be.

In Myanmar many species of Nyaung [Bodhi tree] grow wild or are planted such as NyaungMokeSeik Bannyan tree with long thick beards shooting out from its branches, NyaungChey-

Htaut Bannyan tree with long shoots coming out from its thick branches like legs to support its long thick branches, Nyaung 'Peinhne' a Bannyan tree with twin features of a bannyan and jack fruit trees, and Nyaung Chin a species of Bannyan with sour tasting buds and leaves for Myanmar traditional salad.

Many proverbs, old sayings and poems mention positively the benevolence of Nyaung tree. Thit tabinkau-ng, ngnet ta thaungna. [သစ်တပင်ကောင်း၊ ငှက်တစ်သောင်းနား]. On a single bannyan tree ten thousand birds rest. အပင်ကြီး၊ အသီးသေးသောညောင်၊ အမြင်နီး၊ ခရီးဝေးသောတောင် [Tree is big but the fruit is small, seemingly near but for distanced is the mountain]. But bannyan tree is

also viewed negatively because of its destructive power. စေတီဖွန်းထား၊ မြက်ဘူရာ၊ တည်ထားကောင်းလျက်၊ ညောင်ပင်ဖျက် [Sacred Buddhist stupas are destroyed by bannyan trees that grow quickly out of the seeds brought by birds. For maintenance archaeologists Nyaung trees are pests to be eliminated as quickly as possible otherwise they swallow up the monuments and other trees.

Because the second latest Buddha of BadhaKaba [Five Buddha world] Gotama happened to gain enlightenment under the Bo tree [Nyaung tree] that tree became sacred Bodhi Tree of our time. Twenty seven Buddha that revealed prior to Gotama became enlightenment under 27 different trees, which are also

Bodhi Trees. The following are the four Buddhas and four Bodhi Trees under which their enlightenments were attained prior to Gotama Buddha.

| Name of Buddha | Name of Bodhi Tree |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Weithabu Buddha | Sal tree [PentacmeSiamesis]. |
| 2. Kakusanda Buddha | Kokko Tree [Albizialebbek] |
| 3. Konagamana Buddha | Yeythaphan Tree [Ficusglomerata] |
| 4. Kassapa Buddha | Bodhi Nyaung Tree [Ficus Raligiosa] |

Maha Bodhi Tree is regarded as a kind of Paribawgaceti in which priestly utensils used by the Buddhas in their life time were enshrined.

Botanically pipal [Nyaung] trees are hardy big trees that can stand any amount of heat and grow big in semi-desert lands. But the month Kasone [May] is the hottest month. Water underground and in environment is exhausted. Hence Myanmar saying goes “တန့်ဆူရေကုန်၊ ကဆုန်ရေခန်း” [In Tagu April water diminishes, in Kasone May water is dried up]. So Buddhists pour water on sacred Bannyan tree [Bodhi Tree] to gain merit. Nyaung Yey Thun Pwe or the festival of pouring water an Sacred Nyaung tree.

Since Buddhism arrived in the Maha Sakarit year [Buddhist era] 103, either seeds or saplings of Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya in India or Dekhinasakha Tree in Sri Lanka had been brought or are still being brought to Myanmar either envoys, Buddhist monks or private personnel as religious gifts, souvenni or presents to be planted at sacred places.

Dekhina Sakha is the sacred Bodhi Tree planted by Bikkhu Saint Mahenidra and Bikkhni Saint Samgha Mitre who were son and daughter of Emperor Asoka. When they were about to begin their Buddhist mission abroad, they made vows at the sacred Bodhi Tree at Bodhgaya in India. That branch of the Sacred Bodhi Tree which inclined towards the south direction where Sri Lanka is, was cut and taken to “Lanka dipa” [the then name of Sri Lanka] which is to the southern most of India, in India Ocean. So that Bannyan Tree is known to Myanmar as Dhekhhina [south] Thakah. When Buddhism declined in the land of its origin and the original Maha Bodhi Tree died due to very old age, Dekhhina Sakha planted in Sri Lanka became the only surviving species of Maha Bodhi Tree of Bodhgaya. Sri Lanka became the centre of Theravada Buddhism after the Fourth Buddhist Synod was held by Buddhist King of Sri Lanka and for the first time that all Buddha Teachings, commentaries and Sub-Commentaries were recorded in writing on palm leaves, with Magahta and Pali translations.

Like other Theravada Buddhist countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Bali island and Java of Indonesia, some parts of Malaysia, Myanmar owed much to Sri Lanka for Theravada Buddhism and Dekhhina Sakha Bodhi tree. Theravada Buddhism is simply Buddhism according to the canonical texts of Tipitakas [Three Baskets or Three Bodies of Buddha's Teachings namely Suttas, Vinayas, and Abhidhamma]. Discoure, Discipline and Philosophy.

Today Maha Bodhi Trees are found in the precincts of great religious monu-

ments and compounds of great monasteries. Their histories are recorded in stone inscriptions on stone pillars posted nearby or on palm leaves or on folding rice papers

or in mural paintings on the ceilings and walls of monuments and Tazaungs [covered corridors].

To mention but a few are big Maha Bodhi trees at old capitals-Bagan, Pinya, Inwa, Taungoo and Konbaung Periods. The earliest evidence of planting Maha Bodhi Tree in Myanmar is found in the reign of King Narapatisithu (1173-1210 A.D) of Bagan Period. One Myanmar monk Maha Thera Ashin Kassapa on return from Sri Lanka brought home seeds of Maha Bodhi Tree and drawings of Maha Zedi Loha Pathada Pyatthat and Sacred relics presented to the King Uzana Pinya Period, A.D 1340, King Narapati and King Maha Thiha Thura of Inwa Period, in 1442 A.D and 1468 respectively, King Dhammazedi in 1471 A.D, King Bodawpaya in A.D 1800. King Bagyidaw in 1834 A.D were also planters of Maha Bodhi Nyaung bin Tree. Particularly in Mandalay in the south east direction there is Maha Bodhi Kone Pagoda where



Buddhist nuns pour water on Bodhi Tree at the Shwedagon Pagoda. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

King Mindon planted Sacred Maha Bodhi saplings at that South-east direction of his palace which is the direction of Tuesday as he was Tuesday born. These Maha Bodhi Trees have grown into full length making the precincts a perfect arborea.

Other Maha Bodhi Trees are found in the compounds of Maha Loka Marazein Pagoda, Sanda Mani Pagoda, Eindaw Ya Pagoda, Set Kyā Siha Pagoda, Sutaung Pyi Pagoda, Sutaungya Pagoda, Chan Tha Gyi Pagoda, Chan Tha Ya Pagoda, in Mandalay and Shwe Kyet Yet Pagoda and Shwe Kyet Kyā Pagoda on the eastern bank of the Ayeyawady River near the great Ava rail way Bridge Sagaing.

In Yangon, at Shwe Dagon Pagoda

hillock there are two Maha Bodhi Trees, one planted in 1905, by Meidat Sayadaw at Southeast corner and the other planted in 1948 at North West corner to commemorate the regarding of Myanmar independence on 4 January 1948. In down town area on the compound of Sule Pagoda, on the north entrance is the only tree still surviving, which is Maha Bodhi Tree. There is the original spring well which still produces clear cool spring water which is used for watering the sacred Bodhi Tree on full moon of Kasone.

Nyaung Yey meaning water for Nyaung tree Sacred Bodhi Tree is commonly used by Myanmar Buddhists. At home on the after are placed. Three water pots with flowers or Thabye [Eugenia] sprigs for three Gems, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.

Nyaung Yey Thun Pwe festival of pouring water on Sacred Bodhi Tree is sung in verse, recorded in prose and reenacted in drama and plays of Myanmar literature, Visual and Performing Arts. The following is the excerpt of Three stanza Ratu [Pikesone Ratu] composed by Amutkyi [Knight minister] Letwei Thonedra of King Sin Byu Shin [1763-76] of late Konbaung Period of Myanmar History. He was sent into exile to Meza Forest due to royal anger. In his solitude in composed two Ratus one of which was Meza Taung Chey which

“At the Nyaung-ye Festival,
Meza people all devout.
Duly fall in prayer and pour
Water to the Bannyan tree.
Free the valley, see, the Shrine
Rises even to the sky.
Meza! Thy Pagoda old
Of the golden cave is there!
Fair to look on ever more
Dimly glimmering O'er the mount.
Dusky floor, To shadowy head
Steady hang night's vaporous yet.
Soon, as a billowing net, are stirred.
Surging fretful as a flood,
Huddle up-ward tower, and crowd.
Then in cloudy streamers free
Stretched across the sea of dawn
Darkling wreathes the heights around,
Lost and drowned.
The travelled mist
Shredded now by twisting winds
Patters- listen!- to the ground
Drip-drop-the sound is loud.
Like rounded clear refrain.
Of the rain, though none there be
See the chariot of the Sun
Peeps o'er, Mt. Yugandhara.
Stooping under vapours wan
Nunbed, the noon I fondly wait,
counting on my fingers chill.
Hours and minutes, till the rays
Spreading fill the world with warmth”.

Nyaung is very commonly used for Myanmar town, village, jetty, barbour, monastery, Pagodas, monuments quarters and vehicles due to its auspiciousness. Thus we have Nyaung Lay bin town [Town with four Bannyan trees], Nyaung don, Shwe Nyaung, Nyaung Shwe towns, Nyaung pin win, Nyaung hnit pin village, Shwe Nyaung bin Sakhan [Golden Nyaung Tree Stations], Nyaung bin Seik [Nyaung ferry or barbour], Nyaung bin Tha Ywa [pleasant tree village. Nyaung Kan Sayadaw [annmifuefq&mawmf], GrealSayadaw monk of Nyaung Lake. Nyaung U Phe one of the five knights eve ant of King Anawrahta of Bagan. He could swin a cross the Ayeyawady River many times in a day.

ရွှေတြိညောင်ရွက် သုံးသုံးသွက်နှင့် လေနက်တိုင်းမည်၊
တည့်ညူလှ၊ ဆံစုဌာသို့
The triangle shape of Nyaung leave is made of copper, alloy, silver or gold as tongue to small balls called ညည်းလဲ ဆွဲလဲ .

In the breeze the metallic tongue shakes striking the little bells to produce pleasant sounds to send out the menage of the Dhamma.

In modern time planting of Bodhi Tree took place on a grand scale on barren hill range near Monywa town, Upper Myanmar. Known at home and abroad as Bodhi Tahtaung hill [One thousand Bodhi Nyaung Trees were planted on that barren hill range led by monk Sayadaw now known as Bodhi Tahtaung Sayadaw. The entire place is now spotted with gigantic religious monuments Buddha Statues, Pagodas, Shrines monasteries manneries and meditation center as well as manmade arborea.

In modern parlance, water pouring on Bodhi Tree on full moon Kasone is Myanmar traditional observance of the world Environment Day.

■

Medical team treats 64 patients possibly afflicted with dengue fever in Rakhine

Upon receiving information on 7 May of villagers becoming sick with aching joints and red spots on their body in Beya village, Pauktaw Township, the Rakhine State health department sent a medical team consisting of a doctor, medical officer, malaria eradication and contagious disease staff on 8 May.

The medical team opened a clinic and attended to 64 pa-

tients out of the village population of 875 in 156 houses. 35 were found sick with aching joints and red spots on their bodies. Test-kit results showed that 14 were infected with dengue fever. There were no fatalities or cases requiring a transfer to a hospital. In order to confirm the dengue occurrence, serum samples were taken from 5 patients and sent to Yangon for

lab testing.

While checking the surrounding villages for other health cases, the medical team is also conducting mosquito reduction activity by changing, emptying, covering and inspecting of water containers as well as using Abate in standing water and fogging operations to eradicate mosquito. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Rakhine Advisory Commission and Rakhine State Government pose for photo. **PHOTO: TIN TUN (IRPD)**

Rakhine Advisory Commission meets Rakhine State Govrnment

Members of the Rakhine State Advisory Commission held talks with Rakhine State Government yesterday in Sittway over implementation of the commission's

interim report. The six-member delegation led by Mr Ghassan Salame also discussed the last situation of the socio-economic development in Rakhine State.

Following the meeting, the delegation Rakhine State-based media and the peoples from the both communities in Rakhine State.— Tin Tun (IPRD) ■

Thura U Shwe Mann receives Japanese Ambassador

Thura U Shwe Mann, Chairman of the Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, received Mr. Tateshi Higuchi, the Japanese ambassador to Myanmar, and party at the Htuttaw's Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters concerning legal affairs, bilateral relations, and economy, development and cooperation and the potential sectors which can bring benefits in the long run.

The meeting was also attended by commission members U Ko Ko Naing, U San Shwe Aung and responsible officials.— Myanmar News Agency ■



Thura U Shwe Mann welcomes Japanese Ambassador Mr. Tateshi Higuchi. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar Gazette Confirmation of heads of service organizations

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each on the expiry of one-year probationary period.

| Name | Appointment |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (1) U Tin Win Aung | Director-General Pyithu Hluttaw's Office |
| (2) U Ko Ko Naing | Director-General Union Supreme Court Office Union Supreme Court |
| (3) U Ko Ko Lwin | Managing Director Myanma Pharmaceutical Industries Ministry of Industry |
| (4) U Khin Maung Win | Director-General Civil Service Affairs Department Union Civil Service Board |

A robber arrested in Maungtaw Township

A squad of police from the security guard and locals arrested Aduya, a robber in Suyali village, Maungtaw Township yesterday.

The combined squad arrested the three robbers including Aduya, who was in possession of a hand-made gun, as they entered Suyali village at 9:00 pm yesterday. It was reported that

the group of robbers led by Aduya- akan killed civilians in Thawun Chaung, Gua Sone and Suyali villages.

The suspect Aduya had wounds in his head and was sent Maungtaw hospital. Police have filed charges against the suspects under the law. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Speech therapy for cleft palates

A three-week speech therapy class to treat patients with cleft lips and cleft palates will be held in the University of Dental Medicine Yangon. The participants

include 12 practitioners from Yangon and Mandalay's University of Dental Medicine, and 5 foreign professionals, totaling 17 participants. —Myanma Alinn ■

Ministry to provide Ks 4.2 billion for old-age pension in fiscal 2017-2018

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement will provide Ks4.2 billion for pensions for those 90-years old and above in fiscal 2017-2018, said an official from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

The ministry has planned to draw up an old-age pension programme starting from December, 2014 to provide Ks10,000 per month to those 90 and above.

"The old-age pension will

be provided to elderly people across the country. We will start to provide old-age pensions in June, said an official from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

Currently, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is providing assistance to pregnant women and their children in Chin State, Rakhine State and the Naga Self-administrative Zone.— 200 ■

Qatar says Syria “de-escalation” plan not an alternative to political transition



A still image taken from a video posted to a social media website and said to be taken on 8 May, 2017, shows smoke rising after what purported to be airstrikes hit an area said to be Latamneh, in Hama province, Syria. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

DOHA — Qatar’s foreign minister on Tuesday welcomed a Russian-brokered agreement for “de-escalation” zones in Syria but said the plan was no substitute for a political transition that would see President Bashar al-Assad step down.

Qatar has been a supporter of rebels who have been fighting to overthrow the Syrian president during six years of civil war.

“It is good to have de-escalation zones but this must be a step to reach a solution to the Syrian crisis and not to use it as an ex-

cuse to delay this solution and to postpone the political transition,” the Qatari foreign ministry quoted Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani as telling the Doha-based al-Jazeera network.

The remarks came after talks between the Qatari minister

and US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in Washington.

Russia brokered the deal for de-escalation zones with backing from Iran and opposition supporter Turkey during ceasefire talks in the Kazakh capital Astana last week. The deal took

effect at midnight on Friday.

Some fighting has continued in those areas, particularly north of Hama city, but the overall intensity has reduced, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said. —Reuters ■

Islamic State says it beheads Russian officer in Syria-SITE

DUBAI — Islamic State has issued a video showing the beheading of what it described as a Russian intelligence officer captured in Syria, the US-based SITE monitoring website reported on Tuesday.

The Russian Defence Ministry and the FSB security service were not immediately available for comment.

The 12-minute Russian-language video, released on the day Russia celebrates the anniversary of the 1945 victory over

Nazi Germany with military parades, showed the man dressed in a black jump suit kneeling in a desert scene and urging other Russian agents to surrender.

“This idiot believed the promises of his state not to abandon him if he was captured,” a narrator says in the recording, before a bearded man beheaded him with a knife.

The authenticity of the recording and the identity of the man could not immediately be verified, nor was it clear when

the killing occurred.

Russian forces are backing Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in his war with rebels and militants seeking to oust him. The video showed scenes of what it described as the aftermath of Russian bombing raids in Syria.

The Russian defence ministry says about 30 Russian servicemen have been killed since the start of the Kremlin’s operation there in September 2015. —Reuters ■

The Secretary-General Message on the Day of Vesak

10 May 2017

I send my warmest wishes to all those celebrating the Day of Vesak in honour of the birth of Lord Buddha. Everyone can draw inspiration from his journey. Born a sheltered prince, Shakyamuni went out into the world to confront and overcome human suffering. As one sutra states, “Because all living beings are subject to illness, I am ill as well.”

This message of compassion is timeless. In our interconnected world, there can be no peace as long as others are in peril; no security as long as others suffer deprivation; no sustainable future until all members of our human family enjoy their human rights. On this Day of Vesak, let us celebrate the wisdom of Lord Buddha by taking action for others with a strong spirit of solidarity.—UNIC/ Yangon ■

Al Shabaab militants attack Somali army base, killing several soldiers

MOGADISHU — Al Shabaab fighters attacked a remote Somali army base northwest of the capital Mogadishu on Tuesday, killing several government soldiers, officials and the militants said.

The Islamist group, which has launched several attacks there in the last few years, said it had seized control of the entire town of Goofgaduud.

“We have captured Goofgaduud. We killed 16 soldiers in the fighting,” said Sheikh Abdisiis Abu Musab, Al Shabaab’s military operation spokesman.

Government and military

officials were not immediately able to confirm the seizure of Goofgaduud, which lies about 250 km (160 miles) northwest of Mogadishu.

“Al Shabaab attacked our base in Goofgaduud in the morning and ambushed other forces that were sent for reinforcement,” said Mohamed Aden, a military official in the region. “We lost at least seven soldiers and one military truck was burnt,” he told Reuters.

Al Shabaab’s casualty figures and those announced by officials often differ.

The group, which once

ruled much of Somalia, has been fighting for years to impose its strict interpretation of Islam on Somalia. African Union and Somali troops have driven it from urban strongholds and ports but they have often struggled to defend smaller, more remote areas from attacks.

Since losing large swathes of territory to the AU peacekeepers supporting the UN-backed government, the insurgents have frequently launched raids and deadly attacks in Mogadishu and other regions controlled by the federal government.—Reuters ■

Five lions flee South Africa’s Kruger park

JOHANNESBURG — Armed South African wildlife rangers and police scoured farmland around a small town near the Mozambican border on Tuesday for five lions that escaped from the country’s main national park.

The animals broke free from the Kruger park on Monday morning close to Komatipoort, a community of about 5,000 people.

“We believe it is five lions, and they are in the sugar cane fields near the border with Mozambique,” said park spokesman Reynold Thakuli.

Trackers will attempt to re-

capture them using tranquiliser guns. The area around Kruger — one of the country’s main tourist attractions — contains villages and farms that also raise cattle, putting livestock as well as people at risk of attack.

In 2015, a lion named Sylvester crawled under an electric fence at another park and went on a three-week sheep-killing spree before he was found by rangers taking a nap.

The cat was earlier this year released back into wild from a 200-hectare holding enclosure.—Reuters ■

Russia showcases Arctic hardware in Red Square military parade

MOSCOW — Russia rolled out air defence systems built to operate in sub-zero Arctic conditions on Tuesday as it showcased its military might at a parade on Moscow's Red Square.

The parade, an annual event commemorating the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in World War Two, took place under grey skies as President Vladimir Putin looked on from a platform alongside Soviet war veterans.

The Kremlin has been flexing its military muscle in the hydrocarbon-rich Arctic region, as it vies for dominance with rivals Canada, the United States and Norway.

"Lessons of the past war remind us to be vigilant, and the Armed Forces of Russia are capable of repelling any potential aggression," Putin told the parade.

"But for an effective battle with terrorism, extremism,



Two Pantsir-SA surface-to-air missile system are seen during the 72nd anniversary of the end of World War II on the Red Square in Moscow on 9 May, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

neo-Nazism and other threats the whole international community needs to be consolidated. ... We are open for such coopera-

tion."

An aerial show by Russia's air force, including warplanes that have flown missions to sup-

port Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's army, was cancelled because of low visibility.

Smaller parades were held in

cities across Russia, in Ukraine's Crimea Peninsula, which Russia annexed three years ago, as well as at Russia's Hmeimim air base in Syria.

Moldovan President Igor Dodon was the only foreign dignitary to attend the Moscow parade. In prior years, leaders including German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Chinese President Xi Jinping had attended.

Tuesday's parade was the first time Russia had showcased its Tor-M and Pantsir SA air defence systems, painted in the white and black colours of the country's Arctic forces.

Also on display were columns of troops, tanks and Russia's Yars intercontinental ballistic missile system.

Putin said: "The Russian soldier today, as in all times, showing courage and heroism, is ready for any feat, for any sacrifice for the sake of his motherland and people."—Reuters ■

No high-rises, no concrete jungle in China's new satellite capital

BEIJING — China will ban large-scale property development including towering skyscrapers in an ambitious new economic zone near Beijing, the leading local Communist Party official wrote in an editorial in the People's Daily on Tuesday.

"Every inch of land" in the Xiongan New Area will be carefully and deliberately planned, wrote Zhao Kezhi, party chief of Hebei province, where Xiongan is located.

The zone, around 100 km (60 miles) southwest of Beijing,

will house some of Beijing's relocated "non-capital functions", though few other details have been announced, and most work appears to still be in the planning stages.

News last month of the scheme to set up the zone — to be modelled on the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone that helped kickstart China's economic reforms in 1980 — sent land prices soaring and prompted government warnings against speculation. Zhao said Xiongan will not engage in

"land finance", referring to the practice of local governments' reliance on revenue from selling land to developers for funding, and will effectively manage land prices, home prices and rents. Policymakers are also stressing green development in Xiongan, which Zhao reinforced by saying there would be no "high-rises, concrete jungles or glass curtains". "We must further free our minds ... and strive to draw the most beautiful picture on a piece of blank paper," he wrote. —Reuters ■

IMF warns Asia to act early on rapidly-ageing population

TOKYO — The International Monetary Fund called on Asian economies to learn from Japan's experience and act early to cope with rapidly ageing populations, warning that parts of the region risk "getting old before becoming rich."

Asia has enjoyed substantial demographic dividends in the past decades, but the growing number of elderly is set to create a demographic "tax" on growth, the IMF said in its economic outlook report for the Asia-Pacific region on Tuesday.

"Adapting to aging could be especially challenging for Asia, as populations living at relatively low per capita income levels in many parts of the region are rapidly becoming old," the report said. "Some countries in Asia are getting old before becoming rich."

The population growth rate is projected to fall to zero for Asia by 2050 and the share of working-age people — now at its peak — will decline over the coming decades, the report said.

The share of the population aged 65 and older will increase rapidly and reach close to two-and-a-half times the current level

by 2050, it said. That means demographics could subtract 0.1 percentage point from annual global growth over the next three decades, it said.

The challenges are particularly huge for Japan, which faces both an ageing and shrinking population. Its labour force shrank by more than 7 per cent in the past two decades, the IMF said.

The high percentage of its citizens living on pensions may be behind Japan's excess savings and low investment, which are weighing on growth and blamed in part for keeping inflation below the Bank of Japan's 2 per cent target, the report said.

"Japan's experience highlights how demographic headwinds can adversely impact growth, inflation dynamics and the effectiveness of monetary policy," it said.

The IMF called on Asian nations to learn from Japan's experience and deal with demographic headwinds early, such as by introducing credible fiscal consolidation plans, boosting female and elderly labour force participation, and revamping social safety nets.—Reuters ■

Kidnapped Pakistani workers from Polish company plead for help

ISLAMABAD — Six Pakistanis working for a Polish oil company who were kidnapped by Taliban militants in November pleaded for their lives in a video released on Tuesday by a militant faction.

The workers were kidnapped in northwest Pakistan while carrying out exploration work for oil and gas surveyor Geofizyka Krakow. A Polish engineer from the same company was kidnapped in late 2008 in

northwest Pakistan and beheaded several months later.

The company has been in liquidation since August, and a spokesman for its parent company, PGNiG, told Reuters at the time the six were kidnapped that they were "sub-contractors".

Neither PGNiG nor Geofizyka Krakow could be immediately reached for comment on the video. The six can be seen in the video sitting on a floor, flanked

by two masked, armed Pakistani Taliban militants while one of them read a statement.

"We are alive and well and appeal to our company, the government of Pakistan, and our families to secure our release as fast as possible or we will meet the same fate as the foreign worker," said the man reading the statement, who identified himself as Abdul Khaliq. —Reuters ■

French ex-prime minister Valls offers to back Macron in June elections

PARIS — Former French Socialist prime minister Manuel Valls said on Tuesday he wanted to stand for President-elect Emmanuel Macron's political movement in June parliamentary elections, the first high-profile defection since Macron's election win on Sunday.

Valls's move could be a boost for Macron, who needs to secure a majority in the elections to have a realistic chance of implementing his ambitious reform plans.

But Macron will be cautious about inviting too many prominent former Socialists into his movement as that would lend credence to the arguments of his conservative opponents that Macron's administration will be a continuation of outgoing President Francois Hollande's unpopular administration.

Valls' overture received a non-committal response from Macron's party. Party spokesman Benjamin Griveaux said Valls had not applied to the party's selection committee and had 24 hours left to do so.

"I will be a candidate for the presidential majority and I



French Prime Minister Manuel Valls (L) and Economy Minister Emmanuel Macron (R) leave the Elysee palace in Paris, France, following the weekly cabinet meeting on 9 March, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

wish to join his (Macron's) movement," Valls, who was prime minister in Hollande's administration between 2014 and 2016, told RTL radio.

"This Socialist party is dead. It is behind us," he said.

"The essential thing today

is to give a broad and coherent majority ... to Emmanuel Macron to allow him to govern."

The defection highlights the disarray in the Socialist party, whose candidate Benoit Hamon attracted just six percent of votes in the first round of the presiden-

tial election.

Valls, who announced in March he would vote for Macron in the presidential election, is on the right of the Socialist party and has similar pro-business views to Macron, who will assume office next Sunday as

France's youngest leader since Napoleon. Jean-Paul Delevoye, head of the committee for selecting parliamentary candidates for Macron's party, said any would-be candidate must respect the party's rules and then the committee would review the application.

"There is one extremely important criterion and that is the sincerity of (the candidate's) support for the presidential programme," he told Reuters.

Macron's party currently has no seats in parliament.

An opinion poll last week predicted however that his party is set to emerge as the largest in the parliamentary elections.

Macron's party chief, Richard Ferrand, told a news conference on Monday that his "En Marche!" movement will now change its name to "En Marche la République" or "Republic on the Move", so as to structure itself more like a traditional party.

Ferrand said the names of Macron's 577 candidates in the legislative elections would be announced on Thursday. —Reuters■

If London were Aleppo — Buckingham Palace destroyed, 4.3 million dead or displaced

BERLIN — The bullet-riddled, bombed-out buildings of Aleppo may bear little resemblance to London's gleaming skyscrapers but the two cities once had much in common, something German artist Hans Hack has seized on to bring home the reality of war.

Before Syria's six-year civil war, Aleppo — like London —

was its country's biggest city, as well as a key commercial hub. But, unlike teeming London, half of Aleppo is now effectively a ghost town.

To bring the suffering home to those in Europe, data visualiser Hack has used United Nations satellite data of Aleppo's destruction and created equivalent maps of London and Berlin.

London suffered the same

damage as Aleppo, entire neighbourhoods would be wiped off the map — in this alternative reality, Buckingham Palace, the Olympic stadium and the tower of London are all rubble. It's an echo of what happened in Aleppo. When the Syrian army captured the city from

rebels in December 2016, the area was in ruins.

What the map doesn't show are the human casualties. Since Syria's civil war began the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights estimates that Aleppo's population fell from 2 million to 1.3 million just after people started returning to the city.—Reuters■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV THANG LONG VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THANG LONG VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11.5.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AIPT-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

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

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

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(10th MAY 2017)

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Taylor Swift.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Taylor Swift working on new music 'around the clock'

LOS ANGELES — Taylor Swift is reportedly working on new music "around the clock" and will share the details soon.

The 26-year-old songstress is focused on her upcoming project, so much so that she cannot wait to share it with her fans, reported E! online.

"Taylor has been writing and recording her new album in Nashville for the last several months. She has been working on it around the clock and will be making an announcement soon. She is really excited about her new music and can't wait to share it with her fans," a source said.

According to the source, the "Shake It Off" singer has been dedicated to creating new songs lately and has been away from the spotlight for sometime.—PTI ■



Mounted warrior knights ride horses along Hollywood Blvd. as extras for the premiere of "King Arthur: Legend of the Sword" at the TCL Chinese Theatre IMAX, in Hollywood, California, US on 8 May, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

King Arthur fights back to big screen, leading the resistance

LONDON — A new dawn, and possibly even a franchise, await the legend of British folklore hero King Arthur.

Warner Bros' "King Arthur: Legend of the Sword," out in US theaters on Friday, revives the tales of the legendary warrior, his famed knights of the round table, and the magician Merlin.

Directed by Guy Ritchie, "Legend of the Sword" goes back to the origins of Arthur, played by Charlie Hunnam, as he is plucked

from the poverty in which he grew up as an orphan, and becomes a reluctant leader of a resistance against his uncle, King Vortigern, played by Jude Law.

"Something that has been really, really important in my life, and it's one of the central themes of the film, is a person's unquestionable ability to elevate themselves in life through conscious endeavor," Hunnam told Reuters.

Arthur is the only one able to

wield the magical sword Excalibur from the stone in which it is trapped and, with the guidance of friends and some wizardry from Merlin, the hero finds himself on a quest to save England from the tyrannical rule of a ruthless king.

While the folklore of King Arthur dates back to the Middle Ages, the story of a civilian uprising is something that can apply to a modern-day audience, said Djimon Hounsou, who plays Arthur's confidant Bedivere.

"It resonates loudly about what's going on in America or, more importantly, about what's going on in the world," Hounsou said. The legends of King Arthur have been adapted into numerous films over the years, from 1953's "Knights of the Round Table" to 2015's "Arthur and Merlin." Ritchie believes it has staying power, saying he has already envisioned several more films for his iteration of the folklore hero.—Reuters ■

Russell Crowe, David Oyelowo Eye Clarence Darrow Movie 'Arc of Justice'

LOS ANGELES — Russell Crowe and David Oyelowo are circling a movie based on one of legendary attorney Clarence Darrow's groundbreaking civil rights cases.

Sources tell Variety that Crowe is in talks to co-star with Oyelowo, who closed a deal, in the adaptation of "Arc of Justice" for the Mark Gordon Company.

The Mark Gordon Company had no comment on Crowe's negotiations.

"Narcos" helmer Jose Padil-

ha is directing with the Mark Gordon Company financing.

Based on Kevin Boyle's book "Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age," the true story centers on a racial incident in 1925 Detroit that put African American doctor Ossian Sweet (Oyelowo) on the stand for murder. His defence was funded by the nascent National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People and led by Darrow (Crowe).

Max Borenstein and Rodney Barnes penned the script. Gordon, Borenstein, Hawk Koch, and Matt Jackson will produce, and Josh Clay Phillips will oversee the production for the Mark Gordon Company.

Oyelowo has earned accolades playing real-life figures, including Dr Martin Luther King, Jr, in the critically acclaimed biopic "Selma." He most recently starred as King Seretse Khama of Botswana in Fox Searchlight's "A United Kingdom."



Russell Crowe David Oyelowo. PHOTO: REUTERS

Crowe is also no stranger to biopics, portraying boxer Jimmy Braddock in "Cinderella Man" and mathematician John Nash in "A Beautiful Mind," which earned him an Oscar nomination.

Oyelowo can be seen next in the latest film in the "Cloverfield" franchise, which bows this fall, and Crowe stars as Dr Jeekyll and Mr Hyde in Universal's "The Mummy," which opens on 9 June.—Reuters ■

Vets posed to strengthen animal aid during emergency

By Supriya Singh

TOKYO — A campaign is under way to create emergency response teams across Japan providing aid for pets and livestock during natural disasters, following the establishment of such services in a number of prefectures.

Formed in the wake of failures following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster, the Veterinary Medical Assistance Team or VMAT — consisting of veterinarians and animal caretakers — was started to respond more effectively in times of need.

“Usually animal welfare groups and vets do go to rescue during natural calamities...but things got out of control during the Great East Japan Earthquake,” said Shinichi Hayama, a professor at the Nippon Veterinary and Life Science University, referring to the disaster in the northeastern prefecture of Fukushima.

“Until then (March 2011) the trend was that people would get involved in rescue efforts on an individual basis, and do as much as they could. But (in Fukushima) tens of thousands of animals were abandoned due to the tsunami and nuclear accident,” leading to a system like VMAT to deal with large-scale disasters.

The absence of a common approach also proved harmful to rescue efforts in Fukushima.

“The absence of a common language, common understanding and a common system among the rescuers, and between the rescuers and those

receiving aid made it difficult for us to deliver aid in 2011,” Masaki Okonogi, head of the VMAT in Gunma Prefecture, said.

Though Fukuoka Prefecture was the pioneer in establishing the first VMAT in the country, Hayama has taken the initiative to spread the organization.

“We need to save animals not just for their sake, but also to save humans as many people do not evacuate during a disaster because they do not want to leave their animals alone,” he said.

He established a group called Japanese Association of Disaster Veterinary Medicine in 2014 that conducts seminars in various prefectures with the aim of establishing VMATs. Okonogi also joined the group, after which VMAT in Gunma was established.

VMAT — the animal version of the Disaster Management Assistance Team that provides aid to humans during disasters — was initially formed in Fukuoka in 2013. It was established in Gunma and Osaka in 2016.

While Tokyo’s VMAT is being created, within this year VMATs are expected to be formed in Nagoya, Sapporo, and a prefecture in Shikoku that has not yet been decided. The Japan Veterinary Medical Association will take charge of spreading the service with the support of Hayama’s team.

The group started providing training to its members from 2014, which led to improved performance in emergency aid after a series of earthquakes hit Kumamoto Prefecture in



Photo taken in April 2016 shows the Veterinary Medical Assistance Team, or VMAT, of Japan’s Fukuoka Prefecture conducting rescue activities in Nishihara, Kumamoto Prefecture, after a series of major earthquakes hit Kumamoto. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

April last year. Stressing the importance of such a system, Hayama said trained vets conduct research to find “what kind of support is required in which area,” and that is not possible on an individual level. “It is important to answer the needs of victims, and set priorities.”

There are, however, many challenges ahead.

Local vets, welfare organizations and government officials need to be more aware of the VMAT’s activities.

“Though communication among aid workers moved a step forward, this time the issue was the lack of knowledge at the receiving end, such as local vets, welfare organizations, and government officials,” said Okonogi, who was one of the four investigatory members sent by the national vet association to Kumamoto.

“What we learned most was

the importance of consistent training for both sides — the receiving and the supporting ends — so that we can use a common language.” Further communication with animal caretakers and training for those on the receiving end is necessary to make the aid process quicker, he said.

Another issue is that vets are not beneficiaries of the country’s Disaster Relief Act — a law designed to protect victims of disasters and maintain social order. Doctors, architects, and government officials are permitted access to disaster areas, and are provided an allowance and compensation in cases of accidents or death, but vets are not guaranteed the same treatment.

Even if they are allowed access to designated areas, they play a limited role as “volunteers,” which is a hindrance in

attracting help, Hayama said.

The reality, however, is that animals may need to be in a shelter for longer periods, up to a month or more, as they develop stress and related diseases, requiring a large number of people who can work on them in rotation.

In a bid to deal with the issue, Tokyo and Gunma prefectures have signed a pact with their municipalities to provide volunteers with allowances and compensation.

Hayama believes in the importance of spreading VMATs throughout the nation to handle such crises.

“Hundreds of thousands of animals are expected to be affected if an inland earthquake hits Tokyo or the Nankai Trough off central and western Japan, and they cannot be aided just with the help of volunteers,” said Hayama. “There is a need to start preparations from now and training.”

“You cannot expect the VMAT of the region that has been affected by a calamity to respond, and therefore support is required from areas not affected by it. You never know when a calamity will hit, so it is important to have VMATs everywhere.”

While mentioning the need to change the Disaster Relief Act, he added, “To be able to change the law, we first need to be recognized by society (at large).”

He also said their efforts were highlighted during the Kumamoto disaster, showing people the importance of their activities.—Kyodo News ■

MRTV

Programme Schedule
(10-5-2017, Wednesday)

6:00 Am
♦ Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
7:00 Am
♦ Breakfast News
7:35 Am
♦ Full Moon Day of Kasone
8:40 Am
♦ Solution for Agriculture
9:10 Am
♦ Life Struggles
9:20 Am
♦ Pyi Thu Ni Ti
9:30 Am
♦ Money Talk Myanmar
10:30 Am
♦ Four Saced Places by Sidagu Sayadaw
11:35 Am
♦ Documentary (Traffic)
12:30 Am
♦ TV Drama Series
1:00 Pm
♦ Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competition
2:20 Pm
♦ TV Drama Series

3:05 Pm
♦ Kyae Pwint Myaye Yin Khone Than
3:15 Pm
♦ TV Drama Series
5:05 Pm
♦ Documentary
5:20 Pm
♦ Documentary (Kasone)
5:30 Pm
♦ MRTV Travelogue
6:15 Pm
♦ Football Magazine
6:30 Pm
♦ Real Story Real Movies
7:15 Pm
♦ TV Drama Series
8:00 Pm
♦ News / International News / Weather Report
8:35 Pm
♦ Documentary
9:00 Pm
♦ Documentary (Kasone)
9:15 Pm
♦ TV Drama Series
10:00 Pm
♦ Fine Arts- Bosom of Dramatic Performance

mitv

Myanmar International

Programme Schedule

(10-5-2017 07:00am ~ 11-5-2017 07:00am)

07:03 Am News
07:27 Am Myanmar Social & Charitable Association (Ep-2) (Jivitadana Hospital)
07:52 Am Talented Musicians
08:03 Am News
08:26 Am The Most Prominent Resort and Residence - Ngapali
08:51 Am Ngapali Beach: Fishing Villages
09:03 Am News
09:27 Am Myanmar Leading Woman: May Sabe Phyu @ L. Hkawn Htoi
09:40 Am Kason Full Moon Day of Buddha
09:51 Am Pyin Oo Lwin Sweater
10:03 Am News

10:25 Am Farming: Duck Breeder
10:36 Am Back To A Paradise (Ep-2)

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03 Pm News
07:26 Pm A Journey for Healthy Future (The 36th Geumsan Insam Festival) (Day-1)
07:45 Pm Amazing: Magician Sak Kaw Ma
08:03 Pm News
08:26 Pm Myanmar Delicate Artistic Creations-Gem Stone Painting)
08:45 Pm Myanmar Outstanding Lady Thin Zar Phyo

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Tuesday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

Liverpool's James Milner. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Liverpool must win last two games, says Milner

LONDON — Liverpool have no margin for error in the race for a top-four place and must win their remaining two Premier League games to make sure of a spot in next season's Champions League, said left back James Milner.

Third-placed Liverpool (70 points, 36 games) are a point and a place above Manchester City,

who have a game in hand. Manchester United are not out of the running in fifth but it is Arsenal who look the biggest threat for a place in the top four.

The Gunners trail Liverpool by seven points but have two games in hand, including Wednesday's trip to Southampton. Liverpool have a difficult visit to West Ham and a home

tie against an already-relegated Middlesbrough left to play.

"We have got to win the last two," Milner told British media. "How would we feel if we miss out? Sick. This is a team and a club that needs to be in the Champions League." Liverpool have struggled for consistency in their last few games, losing at home to Crystal Palace, scraping

a 1-0 win at Watford and drawing 0-0 at home to Southampton at the weekend in a game Milner failed to convert a penalty.

"We have shown on any one day we can beat anyone so if we could get in the Champions League we know we could be a match for anyone," he said. "We have got to do it consistently." —Reuters ■

Thailand, Myanmar score first ASEAN U-15 wins

MYANMAR won its first match at the ASEAN Football Federation U15 Girls' Championship yesterday in Laos.

Myanmar beat Laos 2-0 in Group A actions at the KM16 Stadium in Vientiane City.

In the next fixture, Myanmar will play against Vietnam on Friday. Today, the Philippines will face Indonesia before a match between Singapore and

Cambodia.

It is the first time that a tournament for U-15 girls is organised in the region. There are nine participants competing in two groups. They will play in a round-robin format in the group stage. The best two squads of each group will advance to the semi-finals.

The final is scheduled on May 20. — Zaw Zaw ■

**PHOTO: MFF**

Former Man UTD player trains Myanmar players

Ronny Johnsen, a Norwegian former center back and defensive midfielder for premier league clubs like Manchester United, is coming to teach aspiring football players in Yangon and Patheingyi from 11 to 15 May.

This program is organized

by Japanese company Manda Fermentation and will have the Norwegian former footballer teach in Yangon on 11 and 12 May, then travel to Patheingyi for 14 and 15 May. Johnsen will attend a press conference concerning this program on the morning of 11 May and in

the evening will be teaching the basics of football to U-12 and U-14 players on the fields of Yangon's National Football Academy.

Johnsen and his team will leave Yangon on the 13th and travel to Patheingyi to instruct around 150 young footballers

in Kyauktada Stadium.

Ronny Johnsen played for Man UTD from 1996 till 2002 and was part of the team that won three cups for Man UTD in 1999. He is partnering with Man UTD in programs in developing youth's sector in football. —Ye Yint Shine ■

West Ham United's Jose Fonte. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

West Ham eyeing Liverpool upset after Tottenham triumph — Fonte

LONDON — West Ham United left Tottenham Hotspur's title hopes in tatters with a shock 1-0 win last week and they have now set their sights on derailing Liverpool's top-four bid, defender Jose Fonte said.

West Ham are currently 12th but have the same number of points (42) as both Southampton (10th) and Bournemouth (11th), though Southampton have played two games less.

West Ham did the double over Liverpool last season and drew 2-2 at Anfield in December, and Fonte said they were going all out to continue their run against the Merseyside club.

"We have a massive game against Liverpool and we want to finish in the top 10, so we have got to win those two games.

It's another big game on Sunday and we want to replicate what we did against Tottenham," Fonte told the club's website (www.whufc.com).

Fonte also said that manager Slaven Bilic's switch to a 3-4-2-1 system suited the team as they recorded four clean sheets in their last five league matches.

"We have found a good system and we've been excellent in the last four games, so I'm pleased, because as a defender it's good to keep clean sheets," Fonte said.

"The three points are always more important, but the clean sheet matters to me." —Reuters ■