

# Vice President stresses need to protect farmers rights



Vice President U Henry Van Thio addresses the Leading Committee for Farmers Rights, Protection and Promotion of Interests meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

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Myanmar is an agriculture-based country in which 70 per cent of farmers depend on the agriculture sector, as do residents in cities connected to agriculture and livestock, which is why speedy efforts for the tasks of farmer rights, protection and farmer's welfare will be carried out, he added.

The Vice President, who is also the leader of the Leading Committee, spoke about five essential aims for protecting the rights and enhancing the economic welfare of farmer's law, which will support farmers with help for suitable loans, assistance with production, investment and technology to increase production, suitable prices for their agricultural products in the market,

to effectively carry out the rights, protection and interests of farmers who own small plots, and to offer support for the grievances and losses caused by natural disasters as much as possible.

He said plenary decisions have been made under the law's chapter 3, section 5 to implement help for farmers who suffered losses in 2016 natural disasters, Ks4.67 billion for crop substitution, Ks4.19 billion for the maintenance of dams, and Ks2.47 billion for the maintenance of roads and bridges, which will be provided from a separate government fund.

With the objective of farmers being able to cultivate crops on time, the amount of loans was increased from Ks1 lakh to Ks1.5 lakh for one acre of rain-

ny season paddy production in 2016-2017, while loans for other crops will be increased from Ks20,000 to Ks50,000 per acre. It is important that Union level ministers, region and state governments, working committees composed of delegations from non government organisations and private entrepreneurs collaborate together in this effort, he said.

Then, Union Minister Dr. Aung Thu, Secretary of the Steering Committee for Farmers Right, Protection and Interests Promotion explained the ongoing plans, sector-wise activities for high agricultural production and breeding for farmer rights, protection and promotion of interests.

Later, discussions on the

interest promotion for breeders, cultivators, farmers through the States and Regions were made by State and Region Chief Ministers and the members of Nay Pyi Taw Council. Union Ministers and those present also discussed the short-term, long term and future vision for the farmers.

The Vice President said the results from this meeting should be implemented practically and another meeting may be called depending on the needs. The plenary meeting was attended by Union Ministers, the Attorney General, Regions and States Chief Ministers, members of Nay Pyi Taw Council, Vice Chairman of the Central Bank, Permanent Secretaries, Directors-General, responsible personnel and invitees.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Improvements for Yangon Bus Service passengers in progress

PLANS are being made to improve passenger convenience in the YBS bus system, while a report has been submitted to the union level for a scheme to punish those who break the rules and regulations, said Daw Nilar Kyaw Yangon Region Minister for Electricity, Industry, Transport and Communication at the Yangon Region Hluttaw meeting yesterday.

"We are doing our best to reduce the number of transfers passengers are facing and we will not increase the number of routes but try to make the existing routes work better. There are 138 Vehicle and Traffic Laws for irresponsible driving, but in reality they are not practical and if the misconduct crosses over our jurisdiction, then we may have to transfer it to the police side, and for that we have submitted to the union level," said Daw Nilar Kyaw.

The minister made her remarks in response to a question asked by U Wai Phyo Han of Yangon Constituency in the Yangon Region Hluttaw meeting on 24 April, asking whether a transparent plan for upholding rules and regulations for public

transport will be shared with the public.

To complement the YBS bus system, efforts have been made to upgrade the Yangon Circular Train, while private businesses are working on a water taxi service which may link jetties with bus stops.

In response to remarks made by Hluttaw representatives, Daw Nilar Kyaw replied, "We altered the original bus routes after listening to the public and discussing with the bus route managers. I cannot accept everyone saying YBS has failed when we are still in the early stages of implementation. The people will make the final decision on its effectiveness."

Currently a law concerning the Yangon Region Transport Authority is being drafted and under the YRTA administration includes buses, taxis, cargo trucks, private vehicles, trains and water and air crafts, therefore efforts are being made to draft a well-rounded law for each sector.

Since its inception in January 2016, 6,000 complaints have been filed against the YBS bus system including overcharging, rude behavior towards passen-

gers, driving past the speed limit, failure to follow the bus route completely, and physical violence.

"Depending on the severity of the complaint, licenses of the drivers and spares may be revoked, or more severe cases may result to expulsion from the YRTA and a ban from working in the transport sector," said Daw Nilar Kyaw.

Currently 10 mobile teams are monitoring bus gates and bus stops for misconduct by bus drivers and spares. In the old Ma Hta Tha system around 5,900 cases were handled in a three-month inspection while in the YBS system 6,500 cases were handled in a three-month period, which leads us to believe that the increased number means complaints are being handled more effectively, she said.

In the old bus system there were 12 deaths and 130 injuries, while in the YBS system there have been seven deaths and 109 injuries.

The YBS system has over 3,700 vehicles running over 80 bus routes for the 2.5 million citizens of Yangon who commute daily.—*Zaw Gyi (Panita)*

## Myanmar, ROK sign technology agreement

A ceremony to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Technology Advice and Solutions from Korea (TASK) between the Ministry of Industry and the Korea Institute for Advancement of Technology (KIAT) was held at the Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and the president of KIAT Mr. Jae Hoon Chung made opening speeches, followed by briefings from ministry officials about agriculture in Myanmar, an update on the companies that manufacture farming equipment and reviews and implementations from Ko-

rean officials about TASK.

Union Minister U Khin-Maung Cho and the KIAT president signed the MoU. The event is aimed at forming frameworks for technological advancement and cooperation between the companies and research organisations of the two countries.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Five suspects detained in Buthidaung Township

ACTING on a tip-off, security forces detained five men on suspicion of receiving terrorist training in Lodesar Khai Village of Buthidaung Township on Wednesday.

The suspects are believed to be related to 13 suspects including Abudulamain and Aduraw Shi from Kyaukaung Village, who

conducted and had undergone terrorist training in Lodesar Khai village, Maungyi Taung Village-tract in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State on 7 March.

The suspects have been handed over to border guard police and security forces are seeking further information.—*Myanmar News Agency*



The workshop on Public Service Media in progress. PHOTO: MNA

## Workshop on Public Service Media held in Nay Pyi Taw

A workshop on Public Service Media (PSM) jointly organised by the Ministry of Information, Myanmar Journalists Association and the Article 19 for materialising the Public Service Media Bill took place at the hall of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the workshop, Director-General of the Information and Public Relations Department U Maung Pe and Article 19 Project Manager Ma Yadanar Thein extended greetings, followed by discussions of PSM, international norms, development of ethnic media, types of PSM that should be used in Myanmar and ways to change state-run media into PSM, including finance and advertisement resources. The PSM Bill was submitted to the parlia-

ment in 2013 and was revoked in 2015.

The IPRD director-general said that the necessities and weak points of the PSM Bill are expected to be discussed at the workshop by the participants. The Article 19 project manager highlighted the roles of civil society organisations in implementing the PSM Bill being carried out by the Ministry of Information.

The workshop was attended by the officials of the ministry and members from Myanmar Journalists Association, Pen Myanmar, Myanmar Women Journalists Association, Burma News International, Myanmar Media Lawyers' Network, Myanmar Journalist's Network and Article 19.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Lake Reed attracts more tourists from India

THE Chin State cabinet is promoting tourism based on Lake Reed, and have found that most of the tourists are from the neighbouring country of India, said the State Hluttaw representative from Haka town.

The lake is located in the north of Reh Khaw Da, a small town that lies near Myanmar's northwestern border with India, making it a convenient trip for those coming from the South Asian country.

Moreover, the authorities



Reed Lake in Chin State has attracted visitors.

are promoting community based tourism (CBT) in Lake Reed so that the cultural mores of ethnic Chins can be exposed to tourists

from India and beyond.

Lake Reed is unique in that it is shaped like a heart.

The natural lake is 2,966 feet

high above the sea level.

The famous heart-shaped lake is 832 acres wide and has a 3-mile circumference and is over

50 feet deep.

What makes Lake Reed unique is that the lake is never short of water.—200

## Reforestation by private sector and government

THE forestry department will plant 36,000 acres of forest per year while private sector will plant 28,000 acres of forest per year beginning in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, according to the forestry department.

If the forestry department and the private sector grow forests at that rate, over 2 million acres of forest will emerge across the country over a 10-year period.

Under the government plan, 352,438 acres of forest will be planted by the forestry department, whereas 285,004 acres of forest will be planted by private companies. Plus, 500,000 acres of natural forest maintained in the arid zone. And 770,332 areas of forest will be planted by the syndicates for the local people.

Moreover, 30 per cent of land will be made into forest land. Although timber extraction

was suspended in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, timber weighing 269,727 tonnes and teak weighing 1,274 tonnes will be produced in the next fiscal year.

Timber extraction has been suspended since 2016-2017 to reduce deforestation. Bago Yoma timber extraction has also been suspended for 10 years. The authorities plan to reduce the volume of timber in fiscal year 2017-2018.—*Min Thu*

## International Modern Technology and Machinery Expo to be held in Mandalay

AN international modern technology and machinery expo will be held from 23 to 25 May in Kanaung hall at the Industrial Zone in Mandalay, according to an official from Exhibition Organising Committee. The exhibition will be held with an aim of introducing international modern technologies and machineries to industrial entrepreneurs from Upper Myanmar and the Mandalay Industrial Zone.

The exhibition is being held for the second time, organised by Ngwe Pinle Media with the assistance of Mandalay Industrial Management Committee. The first exhibition was held in 2016 in Nay Pyi Taw.

"This expo will include talks concerning the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), Internal Revenue Department, social welfare and labour issues, occupational hazards, banking and

insurance. In addition, technological companies will introduce modern technologies and accessories through demonstrations. Entertainment programmes will also be included in this expo." said an exhibition organising committee official. A domestic products show and competition will also take place, with the best machineries and products selected for prizes for the best products of 2017.—200

## Intellectual Property Laws need awareness promotion

INTELLECTUAL property laws such as industrial design, invention trademarks and literature and artistic patent rights need awareness promotion in Myanmar, because only a few people know that intellectual property laws even exist, according to Daw Swe Zin Htike, vice chairperson of Intellectual property entrepreneurs' association.

"Myanmar people are not very much aware of the intellectual property (IP) law. Even the inventors and manufacturers are not aware of the IP laws," she added.

Lack of knowledge of IP laws in Myanmar has led people from other countries to register Myanmar traditional make-up (Thanakha) and local products such as fruits and vegetables as

their patented products, in accord with the IP laws.

People need to be aware of the IP laws and to be able to protect their own products.

The ministry of planning and finance permitted the establishment of an Intellectual Property Entrepreneurs' Association on 26 June, 2014 with a view to rapid development of the IP sector.—200

## ICRC delegation visits Buthidaung in Rakhine State

A 10-member delegation led by Mr. Jacque Ducros De Lafarga De Romefort from the International Committee of the Red Cross visited Buthidaung Prison in Buthidaung, Rakhine State yesterday morning.

The ICRC delegation members discussed with In-charge U Chan Aye Kyaw over provision

of healthcare services to the prisoners and confinement of the inmates.

They also looked round the hostels for the inmates, prison hospital and lockdown zone. In the evening, the delegation members met with the prisoners and interviewed them.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Raw opium seized in Tangyan

An anti-narcotics squad from Tangyan stopped and searched a motorcycle ridden by Ma Nan Kham Aung near Pin Taing, a small-vehicle passenger gate in Ward 3, Tangyan on Wednesday. Local police arrested Ma Nan

Kham Aung, 28, after she was found to be in possession of six kilos of raw opium. Police have taken action against Ma Nan Kham Aung under the Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*Myanmar Police Force*

## Illegal goods worth Ks16.93 billion seized in fiscal year 2016-2017

ILLEGAL goods worth Ks16.92 billion were seized in fiscal year 2016-2017, said an official from the Ministry of Planning and Finance on 24 April at a meeting which held at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw to clarify matters regarding the ministry's performance during their first year.

"People are saying that the goods will not flow well if the ministry checks the illegal goods at the checkpoints, which are too narrow to check three, four vehicles simultaneously. So, we have widened the checkpoints to be able to check at least two or three vehicles at the same time to reduce the delay of flowing of the goods," said the official. The

customs department seized illegal goods worth Ks16.92 billion at the Yaypu and Mayanchaung checkpoints, as well as through the checkpoints in other regions in fiscal year 2016-2017, according to the customs department.

"Our Yaypu and Mayanchaung checkpoints were reopened recently. In fiscal year 2016-2017, the head office seized illegal goods worth Ks6.58 billion, the customs checkpoints from other states and regions seized the goods worth Ks7.29 billion and Yaypu checkpoint seized illegal goods worth Ks2.22 billion. The Mayanchaung checkpoint seized illegal goods worth Ks822.9 million in March alone.—*Min Thu*