President’s New Year Message

My fellow countrymen,

ON this auspicious occasion of the New Year, I send my good wishes to all countrymen and brothers and sisters of the ethnic national races.

My fellow countrymen,

From the time our Union Government took office, we have steadfastly worked hard with special zeal in accordance with the objectives and policies laid down for the good of the country for internal peace, national reconciliation, emergence of a Democratic Federal Republic, improving the socio-economic life of the people. We were able to achieve a certain degree of success.

My fellow countrymen,

At this time we are organizing various levels of the 21st Century Panglong Conference for the emergence of a Democratic Federal Republic which the people are yearning for. With this in mind, the Union Government, the People, the Hluttaw, the Tatmadaw, Political parties, Civil Society Organizations, Ethnic Armed Organizations have been working very hard collectively.

As we work for a peaceful, prosperous and developed country, it is natural to encounter challenges and difficulties. To overcome these challenges and difficulties, I wish to solemnly urge the entire people to work with us with full force and enthusiasm.

In this New Year, I pray for the health and happiness of all our countrymen and brothers and sisters of ethnic national races. May all your good wishes be fulfilled. — MNA

President U Htin Kyaw.
Sitagu Sayadaw sends New Year Message

Sitagu Sayadaw, one of the eminent monks of Myanmar sent New Years’ Message for the entire Myanmar.

In his message, the Sayadaw pointed out the Buddha’s concept of impermanence as changes never change. “You cannot step into the same river twice,” he noted, saying the water that touches your feet is constantly flowing, so every second the-going-and-the-coming process goes on. What the Sayadaw means is that changes constantly occur as the new is filling the places the old has left. Humans must aware of the process, he noted. So people who do everything in time win the race against the time. The Sayadaw said if a person fails to accomplish a task according to schedule, he in fact is wasting his time.

Buddha has already taught mankind about the abilities to win the race against the time. So people must be always active and alert. They should also have the resolution. Without resolution and hope, a person cannot have the alertness and awareness. People must control their actions, words or in other words they should have the discipline. So there must be the regimen and discipline in everything including in the religion and country.

There is local discipline and it depends on location and time. The Sayadaw also stated the importance of mental and physical stability. If a person has the alertness, alertness, awareness, attentiveness, discipline and politeness he can create a base from which immense power can be generated.

The Sayadaw wishes everyone a peaceful and pleasant New Year and the base of immense power.

— MNA

New Year Greeting Message

from Dr. Bhaddanta Nanda
Marla Bhivamsa

1/ I hereby sent my New Year Blessing to all beings on the auspicious occasion of the New Year 2018.

2/ Each and every individual including the monks in the religious order living in the Union of Myanmar are required to make efforts by abiding by rules and regulations in accord with the noble principles so that we can put the new year on record as the auspicious year.

3/ Only if there are loving-kindness and pity to each other, freedom from grudge and hatred among each other and paying mutual respect and honesty, will we be able to overcome all the difficulties we encounter.

4/ By cleansing our minds, morality and souls, and by upgrading our intellect, skills and abilities I hereby urge you to shape your beautiful life and future.

May you all be blessed with good wealth, health and pleasure.

— MNA

Volunteers for Literary Conference 2017 honoured

Those who volunteered for the Literary Conference 2017, conducted with the theme of “Free Literature, Free Voice” were honoured in Yangon yesterday.

The ceremony to honour them was opened with greetings by U Aung Soe, Chairman of the committee on holding the conference.

As a gesture of passing down the heritage of literature to the new generation at the ceremony, flags representing 11 Myanmar literary organizations which jointly organized the conference, were handed over to U Myint Nyein, Secretary of the committee on holding the conference, by film director U Myint Maung Kyaw who took a role in raising awareness of promoting literature.

Youths representatives of the 11 literature organizations shared their experiences in volunteering for the conference.

Before the dinner, officials concerned presented certificates of honour to the volunteers.

The conference was held for four days from 13 to 16 December, and the decisions from the conference will be submitted to the government and respective departments via the Ministry of Information. The Literary Conference 2017 was jointly organized by 11 Myanmar literary organizations.—Myanmar News Agency
New Year Greetings from Vice President U Myint Swe for 2018

Dear ethnic nationals and citizens,

I hereby send good wishes and greetings on this auspicious 2018 New Year Day for the good health and auspiciousness of all ethnic brothers and sisters who were born in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

2017 the old year has ended and we are now in the New Year. In the New Year I hope all Union citizens will be able to exert concerted efforts in unity to achieve Peace and Development very soon.

As we work for Peace, we need to take lessons from the old year. In the New Year, we need to continue our efforts based on unity with renewed strength and new spirit to complete the peace process smoothly and quickly.

Our country will develop and prosper only if we work hard with unity using the power of our intellect and mind.

No matter how many difficulties there may be, if we work hard with the power of the people, we shall be able to build the Democratic Federal Republic successfully and the fruits thus produced will be enjoyed equally by all Union citizens.

May all Union citizens be blessed with good health and happiness in the New Year.

New Year Greetings from Vice President U Henry Van Thio for 2018

Dear Union citizens of all ethnic races,

On this auspicious occasion of the 2018 New Year, I wish to first of all send greetings and good wishes to all Union citizens for their good health and happiness. May you all be blessed with auspiciousness.

Today is the beginning of 2018 during which all Union citizens should work in unity and friendship for development of the people’s socio-economic life, emergence of a Democratic Federal Republic and for Peace which is one important requirement for national development. We need to take lessons from the old year and turn the challenges of the New Year into opportunities and then to reap good results. Since all the efforts of the Union Government for the State and the Union citizens can succeed only if there is public support, I would therefore like to urge all Union citizens to join in and participate. I also take this opportunity to send greetings and good wishes and may all your good wishes be fulfilled.

Union Minister inspects Myanmar International Radio

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint meets staff of Myanmar International Radio. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint inspect ed preparations for English program broadcasting of Myanmar International Radio of Shwe Than Lwin Company in Yangon yesterday. Chairman of the committee, U Kyaw Win said, Shwe Than Lwin is playing a role in fulfilling the requirement of the people. It is serving the interest of the nation, the people and the peace process in cooperation with the Information Ministry. Officials of the Myanmar International Radio explained radio programs.

The minister looked into the requirements of the preparations for life programs, studios, and the central control room.

The ministry and the company will jointly launch the Myanmar International Radio from 6 am to 11 pm daily. The distribution of authentic news about Myanmar, the development of tourism in Myanmar, and the promotion of foreign investments in the country are the main goal of the Myanmar International Radio.

—Myanmar News Agency

Dream World Lighting Festival launches in Mdy

DREAM World Lighting Festival, the international standard lighting festival has officially launched along Industrial Park Road in Pyigyitagon Township in Mandalay this Saturday. Beginning on 30 December, the lighting festival will last until the end of January, 2018.

Organizers say that they used more than 100 million light bulbs for the festival, featuring light sculptures including a light peacock, tower, giraffe, U Bain Bridge and shapes of significant places in PyinOoLwin and Mandalay, and an array of designs inspired by Myanmar’s culture.

Entrance fees is Ks2,000 per adult and Ks1,000 per child. Monks, nuns and children under the age of five years old are allowed to celebrate the festival of light free of charge. An organizer said that more visitors are expected to come to the lights festival.

Present on the occasion were U Sai Kyaw Zaw, Mandalay Region Minister for Shan Ethnic Affairs and cabinet members of the region government, and the event organizers.—002

Vice President U Myint Swe. PHOTO: MNA

Vice President U Henry Van Thio. PHOTO: MNA

Photo: MNA
More than 1,000 tons of watermelon likely to be shipped to Hong Kong this FY

PHOTO: AUNG WIN (PYAPON)

anar’s watermelon went to China market through Muse border trade while they are also exported to Singapore and Malaysia. Agro products such as rice, peas, dried tea leaf, muskmelon, watermelon, mangoes are exported to China and capital goods such as agriculture equipments and consumer goods are imported into the country. –GNLM

MOLIP shows approval for Chinshwehaw as International Land Border Checkpoint

May Thet Hnin
UNION Minister U Thein Swe for Labour, Immigration and Population said that ministry is ready to approve Chinshwehaw as International Land Point of Entry at 13th regular meeting of Vice President U Myint Swe with businessmen on 30th December.

To transform into International Land Border Gate, related region and state governments must submit a proposal to the Union Government and continues to seek approval from the related ministries. It will proceed to the Security, Peace and Stability and the Rule of Law Working Committee under no objection, through which will go on the President Office. Upon approval of the President Office, the two ministries of Foreign Affairs also need to reach an agreement.

Chinshwehaw is Sino-Myanmar border gate, flowing in and out of around 4,000 Chinese and about 10,000 Myanmar citizens.

In order to set International Land Border Checkpoint, cross-border demarcation, cross-border security, good transportation and agreement of two countries are required. Of about 8 border gates between China and Myanmar, Chinshwehaw border gate performs the second largest trade. Main export items are various pulses, corns, sesame, rice, rubber, fisheries, sugar and sugarcane whereas seasoning powder, fertilizer, construction equipments, and consumer goods are mainly imported into the country.

Chinshwehaw has a good potential in trade and tourism depending on peace and stability of this region. Kwanlon-Hepon-Chinshwehaw-Laukkai Cross-Border Merchants Association requested the Union Government to improve Chinshwehaw as international land border gate which allows the cross-border trippers to be in and out under visa, passport and other required documents.

Border trade will turn to soar if Chinshwehaw is recognized as International land border gate. However, there are challenges like lack of economic zone and warehouses and a small number of trucks. China is reportedly preparing to set up a zone, said Daw Kyu Kyu, the secretary of the aforementioned association.

Chinshwehaw trade has remarkably risen since 2013-2014. Last FY, Chinshwehaw trade reached US$37 million. This FY intends to receive over US$40 million.

Coconut export to Thailand up by 15 per cent this year

VOLUME of coconut export to Thailand has increased about 15 per cent this year, according to yesterday’s report of Myawady Daily.

During this year, about 700,000 coconuts is monthly exported to Thailand. Last year’s export saw only 500,000-600,000 coconut per month, Daw San San Han, general secretary of Myanmar Coconut Group said Myawady Daily.

Coconut export was halted when Thailand scaled up tax rate on coconuts between May and September. And the trade resumed in the end of September. Thailand hikes up the tax rate on imported coconuts during which the country itself produces coconuts. This is why, the export volume usually decreases that particular time of the year.

In 2015-2016 fiscal year, about 65 tonnes of coconut worth Ks12million were exported to Ranong, Thailand whereas 275 tonnes of coconut worth about Ks5million were exported from April to December in this FY 2016-2017 through Kawthoung border trade camp, according to the Commerce Ministry. –GNLM

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Global New Light of Myanmar
Local Business

Coconut export to Thailand up by 15 per cent this year

The Global New Light of Myanmar
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China increases import of corns from Myanmar

China, the world’s most populous nation, increased its import of corns from Myanmar during the week commencing 9 December via four cross-border points, according to border trade authorities.

According to the official statistics, Myanmar exported more than 54,000 tonnes of corns with a value of US$11.318 million to the neighbour from 9 to 15 December, including 52,835 tonnes from Muse border gate, 813 tonnes from Lwejel, 804 tonnes from Chinshwehaw and 85 tonnes from Kanpaiktee. The import volume increased by 9,488 tonnes in comparison with the previous week.

According to wholesalers, the prices of corn increased to Ks282,382 per tonne from Ks281,633 within one week while the transportation charges along Mandalay-Muse route were Ks62-Ks66 per viss (a viss is equivalent to 3.6 pounds).

The Kingdom of Thailand also imported 299 tonnes of corn seeds amounting to $45,281 from Tachilek border during the same week.—Swe Nyein

Myanmar Real Estate Services Association requests the gov’t to slash income tax

Myanmar Real Estate Services Association called on the government to transparently set the price of the house per square feet in other states and regions like Yangon and Mandalay.

Additionally, they asked for a chance to participate in setting a square feet price of the real property.

“Some regions and states are lack of transparency, putting heavy burden on the local residents to pay tax. Moreover, they are still not accustomed to tax culture”, said U Khin Maung Than.

U Khin Maung Than responded that the director-general of the Internal Revenue Department said that we have a plan to make tax revision. Some ASEAN countries do not impose an income tax but only stamp duty.
New Year Greeting Message from U Win Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw

I hereby sent my New Year Wish to you all living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the New Year 2018, to be blessed with good health, wealth and happiness.

Now is the time when the entire populace is making concerted efforts for the success of the national reconciliation, internal peace and democratic transition. And, we are trying our best to build our nation into the Federal Democratic Union that all the national populace greatly hoped for. For the success of the said process, it is greatly in need of developing the democratic practices and the Unity Spirit in us all.

The State Government is making its concerted efforts to successfully overcome potential crises, difficulties and challenges on our way to our long-awaited democratic goal, with the encouragement and supports of the national personalities.

May our citizens be healthy and happy on the auspicious occasion of the New Year Day. May the peaceful and developed Union emerge as soon as possible. —MNA

New Year Day Message from Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw

Dear ethnic brothers and sisters living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and all Myanmar nationals living abroad. At this auspicious time of the New Year, first of all let me send greetings and good wishes for your good health and happiness. May the blessings of auspiciousness be with all of you.

At this auspicious time when we are entering into a New Year after the passing of the old year with the change of many seasons, all Union citizens should learn lessons from the experiences, difficulties and challenges encountered during the old year.

They should seek better opportunities, better methods, and better conditions and use these innovatively for future progress.

Beginning from the New Year in implementing all undertakings, they should work with “Cetana”, due diligence and good character with renewed strength, new attitudes and new personalities.

In the same way, as we walk the path towards the common goal of a prosperous and developed Democratic Federal Republic, which is the aspiration of all Union nationals, peace is the critical element. We can work for development only when we have peace. I therefore wish to urge all Union citizens to work in any capacity they may be needed in unity and hand-in-hand for the cessation of all armed conflicts within the Union and to also participate in all aspects of the peace process so that we can achieve eternal peace which is based on “Metta” and good will.

I send prayers and good wishes for all Myanmar citizens to have peace in their hearts and to be able to lead peaceful and happy lives. May they all have the wisdom to always keep in their hearts the teachings of each of their religions.—MNA

New Year Message of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on January 1, 2018

Esteemed people, I would like to extend my greetings to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and all national people to be graceful and auspicious on the occasion of the New Year 2018.

Now the year 2017 has come to an end. During this year, we encountered many cases. We achieved successes in some cases and could overcome some others. It is sure that we would certainly achieve successes if we do our works better by taking lessons from the past.

The day which falls on 4th January will turn 70 years of regaining Independence of our country. In looking back the history we have passed, three points—the first for ensuring peace and stability of the State, the second for development of the State and the third for unity of the State—can be seen as tasks which need to be carried out by all our people in unison. Everybody has many desires on improvement of their socioeconomic status. So I would like to totally express my wish the Tatmadaw will give a helping hand to all for carrying out the tasks to be able to achieve success.

I wish again may you all enjoy physical and mental wellbeing in this New Year! —C-in-C Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

“Nationalism should not be ‘racialism’ or ‘chauvinism’, it must not be a narrow-minded racial doctrine based on the concept that only one’s own race should rule the world. Loving one’s own race should not mean hatred and disdain for other races, it should be a nationalism that makes countries across the world work for mutual prosperity in friendship and amity.”

(Excerpt from the address delivered by General Aung San at the Fourth Meeting of the State Leaders held in August, 1945)
New Year wishes by religious leaders

Cardinal Charles Maung Bo sends New Year message

Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, Archbishop of Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Yangon sent New Year message.

In his message, the cardinal said all must start the new year with new mind and body and thanksgiving. No one can reach future by sticking in respect for every race and forgiving the past and have the present. All can acquire the New Year message. No one can start the new year with cardinal said all must thanksgiving.

On behalf of the Association of Myanmar Hindus, I would like to wish all the citizens of Myanmar and my brothers and sisters a blissful 2018. May it be filled with good health and prosperity for all.

Dr. Hla Tun (Association of Myanmar Hindus)

My first hope for the new year is peace. I wish for all the people of the country and for them to overcome all the obstacles and enter the international community with confidence.

Dr. Hla Tun (Association of Myanmar Hindus)

On behalf of the Association of Myanmar Hindus, I would like to wish all the citizens of Myanmar and my brothers and sisters a blissful 2018. May it be filled with good health and prosperity for all.

Dr. Hla Tun

I pray for Myanmar to become more peaceful, united, and be able to keep in stride with the world and the international community.

New Year Greetings by celebrities

Dr. Aung Thura (CEO, Thura Swiss Ltd.)

I want to develop my country all-round sectors such as economy, social affairs, peace process and so on. I mean it is important to get gradual and sustainable development in the long run. Government, businessmen and the public should work hand in hand to promote the economy. We need a lot of foreign investment which plays an important role to operate the business with the entrepreneurs in our country, thereby they can know better how to cooperate with them. We should try not to lag behind in the development.

Dr. Aung Thura

For All® as it comes, it is essential to form Public-Private-People Partnership in the country. I wish all the foreign and local visitors physical and mental well-being in the relief camps, in the northern part of Myanmar. They need to return to their respective places peacefully. I think it is due to the lack of peace which can cause these conflicts in this region. I share my loving-kindness to all readers across the country.

Actor Khant Sithu

As we celebrate the New Year, I wish everyone success, a healthy long life and a fresh new start. Happy New Year!

U Zin Wine, chairman of Myanmar Motion Picture Association

Wishing you healthy, peaceful and joyful New Year full of fun!

Vocalist Aung Het

This 2018 New Year, may you have happiness, good health and prosperity. May all your dreams come true very soon.

—MNA

New Year weather forecast

U Tun Lwin, an expert in meteorology and hydrology said Myanmar faced hardships, especially in politics and economy in 2017, and expressed hope to overcome them in 2018.

He said the entire nation hopes for a new state in 2018 after overcoming all kinds of hardships. Hopefully, the country could make a good move forward.

The people, the government, and the technicians will made greater cooperation for alleviating the adverse effects of climate.

—Thi Thi Min
Opinion

Meaningful Independence

By Yone Phyu Lay

Pledging Allegiance to the Flag

Bogyoke’s speeches and the event of our country’s achievement of Independence now lasted for 70 years. We are still seeing offences causing hindrances for the public. We are yet to try ourselves to be well-disciplined and well-behaved citizens.

Pledging Allegiance to the Flag

By Yone Phyu Lay

Fullmoon of Paya: Aitattaraung Sutta Day

Maha Bodhithama Jotika Dhaha, Baha, Dhahaba, Khin Maung Nyunt

The month of Pyatho in Myanmar Lunar Calendar roughly corresponds to January. This year Pyatho Fullmoon falls on 19th January 2018. Myanmar traditional festival of Pyatho is an independent event. It’s fullmoon day is religiously auspicious because it was on Pyatho Fullmoon, King Pyatho (Sutaung Pyaung) delivered his Dhamma to the people of Myanmar. After learning and understanding Buddha’s Dhamma all Aitathayas attained Arahanthood (Saint monk).

Buddhists changed the fullmoon day of Pyatho as Aitattaraung Sutta Day. In order to pay respects and homage to Buddha Sasana, Aitattaraung Sutta Day is observed by all the Myanmar people.

The Global New Light of Myanmar

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submission of poetry, short stories, essays, travel and other non-fiction articles weekly. Please submit your稿件 to our News Office: Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

The submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted and (if different) your penname.

Full moon day of Pyatho in Myanmar is considered as shrine Taung Aikhaung Aitathawng Say (Akhayang Say). The Day of one full-moon day of Pyatho in Myanmar, is also known as the Day of Buddha Sasana. The Buddhists annually commemorate the full moon day of Pyatho. In Myanmar this day is commemorated as Shin Taung Aikhaung Aitathawng Say (Akhayang Say).

This Aitathawng Day is observed by all the Myanmar people and it is celebrated by all the Aitathayas. Shin Taung Aikhaung Aitathawng Say should be revived and promoted because in these days younger generations of Myanmar are not aware of it, let alone in History and religious significance.

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Peace Commission working towards achieving more progress

NATIONAL League for Democracy-NLD held its eighth central committee meeting in Yangon yesterday, after which a press meet followed.

The meeting held on 30 and 31 December discussed reports of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee, Central Economic Committee, Central Information Committee, Central Women’s Work Committee, Central Labour Affairs Committee, Central Farmers Work Committee, MPs Complaint Centre, Second All Myanmar Youth Commission, and Central Social Support group.

The meeting made six resolutions including the substitution of committee members at different levels, the acceleration of party organization activities, harmonious activities among the party, the Hluttaw and the government, the reformulation of committees, the reinforcement of the task forces, and the provision of the assistance to the people.

Members of the Secretariat of the NLD Central Committee U Win Htein, U Nyan Win and U Han Tha Myint met the press in the afternoon. In response to the media questions, U Nyan Win said the NLD has provided a lot of assistance to the displaced persons. The women’s team visited Kachin State, and will visit it again. Although the NLD could not make concrete promises, it assures to alleviate the situation there to the most possible degree.

As regards the peace process, he said the 21st Century Panglong Conference has approved 37 resolutions. The Peace Commission is working towards achieving more progress. “We assure that our efforts for peace are developing with high momentum,” he said.— Zaw Gyi

Peace makers’ New Year wishes

Ye Khaung Nyunt, Photo: Phoe Htaung
Dr. Tin Myo Win
Chairman, Peace Commission
All Myanmar people want peace. As all know, We all have been working hard with compassion and loving kindness to achieve eternal peace in our country. There is no doubt that all Myanmar people want to achieve peace because we all understand that we can not see stability and development individually and nationwide without peace.

We strongly believe that if all of us work together with one ambition, we will reach our goal of peace.

I strongly believe that if we build trust, compassion and loving kindness, we, together with all stake holders for peace, will reach the goal of peace in 2018. Only then, we can show the model of peace making to the world which brings peace and development to our peoples.

U Hla Maung Shwe
(Member of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee Secretariat)
We worked hard with commitment for peace in 2017. I can say that we achieved progress in 2017. In 2017, we held national-level political dialogues at six locations. Thirty-seven points of the outcomes from those dialogues were agreed as a part of the Union Agreement.

This is our achievement in 2017. Besides, in October, November and December 2017, the government and the Tatmadaw held meetings with those who will attend the peace conference and conducted negotiations with them several times in attempts to achieve success in the coming Union Peace Conference.

At the end of 2017, the Peace Commission and the delegation for peace negotiation of the United Nationalities Federal Council-UNFC held negotiations and now we are putting finishing touches on our final negotiations.

That’s why, what we hope is that we can do more preparations for the Union Peace Conference to be held at the end of January 2018.

We also hope that those members of the UNFC will sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement before the coming Union Peace Conference.

We also hope that those ethnic armed groups which have not yet signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement would sign the NCA in 2018.

Yebaw Myo Win
Vice Chairman, All Burma Students’ Democratic Front-ABSDF
In 2018, we must make efforts for finding best answer for peace of our country. In 2017, we did our best to make peace for our country. It is not easy to solve political problem happened in our country for decades within a day. We understand that we will face difficulties.

But, when we solve the political problem with political ways, we need all-inclusiveness.

We all should take lessons from the past. Without participation of those who involve in political conflicts, we can not find the answer for the political problem.

Currently, we are implementing peace process based on the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement as part of efforts for all inclusiveness of the peace process.

NCA is not perfect one. But, it can guarantee reducing armed conflicts.

It opens the door to political dialogues for solving political problems. While walking on the road of NCA, we all need to work hard to open the door of peace wide.

Prices of shrimp paste high in domestic market

SHRIMP catchers say that the prices of shrimp paste have been on the rise in domestic market due to low production, according to a report of the Myawady Daily issued on Sunday.

The majority of residents in Zeegyaung Village-tract in Hainggyikyun Town in Ayeyawady Region conduct shrimp catching and shrimp paste production on a commercial scale, said one of residents.

However, this year saw a decrease in number of shrimp catchers in the villages. A shortage of raw materials is a main reason why the region saw a significant decline in production.

Currently, the prices of shrimp paste has been sold between Ks1,500 and Ks8,000 per viss.

A viss is equivalent to 3.6 pounds while a viss of shrimp paste produced from village along the coastal area is worth Ks1,500-Ks3,500.

Normally, shrimp paste produced from the village-tract is mainly sent to nearby villages in Hainggyikyun Town, Pathein and Yangon.—GNLM

Members of the Secretariat of the NLD Central Committee U Win Htein, U Nyan Win and U Han Tha Myint meet the press. PHOTO: ZAW GYI
The Global New Light of Myanmar sends its best wishes to our valued readers, distributors, advertisers, media agencies and all the people of Myanmar for good health, happiness, and success. May you be greeted every day with auspiciousness in the New Year.
The 31st Veterinary Science convocation ceremony of Yazin University of Veterinary Science was held yesterday morning at the golden jubilee hall of the University, Zayar Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw.

At the ceremony, the graduates took the oath in front of the rector and then the rector Dr Mar Mar Win presented the certificates to each convocation student. Then, Dr Mar Mar Win delivered congratulation speech in which he said that the Yazin University of Veterinary Science was established in 1975 and a total of 5,225 vets were produced during the 60-year period.

Then, Dr Aung Thu Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation gave the Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation for Maungtaw region. More village-owned fishponds will be dug in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, for ensuring fish sufficiency in the region, according to U Khin Maung Maw, Director General of Fishery Department who inspected the fishponds in Maungtaw region yesterday morning with his party.

“With the state program, digging of fishponds in the villages of Maungtaw region is underway. We requested the budget allocation for 82 villages to the state government. Ponds for five villages, Mawya Wadi, Shwe Baho, Khaye Myaing, Phar Rut Chaung and Aung Zaya were already dug. All villages had already dug one acre each. Our fishery department will dig more ponds, depending on the budgets allowed by state government. The fingerlings will be distributed by Myo Thu Gyi larval fish reproduction station”, said U Khin Maung Maw.

Although Maungtaw region is a place where inshore and offshore fishing can be done, freshwater fish and prawn breeding should also be done partly. During this year, nearly half or two-third of fishponds of 82 villages can be completed. If the fish and prawn can be bred in the old creeks and lakes, fish supply of Maungtaw Township can meet the demand, he added.

Fishermen in the region are more interested in offshore fishing as the region is close to Bay of Bengal and both inshore and offshore fishing can be made. However, fishermen are afraid of dangers in the sea. Fish and prawn are plenty in the sea. Currently, it is difficult to catch fish and prawn as the regional security is not in safe condition. Digging fishponds is indeed beneficial for the villages’ long-term fish consuming”, said Ko Tin Aung, leader of Shwe Baho Village.

Director General and party also gave words of encouragement and provided dried fish and peas to the staff of fishery department.

— Myint Maung/ Zaya

31st convocation ceremony of Yazin University of Veterinary Science held

More village-owned fishponds for Maungtaw region

Thandwe District Association (Yangon) holds annual gathering

Thandwe District Association (Yangon) holds its annual gathering yesterday at the U Ottama Park in Yangon yesterday.

The association is formed with Rakhine communities in Yangon especially from Thandwe, Gwa, Taunggup. Those who took part in the gathering were treated with traditional cuisine of Thandwe.

“The gathering turns 15th anniversary this year. The association holds the gathering every year for peoples from, Taunggup and Gwa townships who are staying in Yangon,” said U Htin Kyaw Lin, Vice-Chairman of the Thandwe District Association (Yangon). Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint also contributed Rakhine traditional cuisine to this gathering, he added. “We are very happy to see our relatives and old friends from Rakhine,” said Ko Te Zar Aung, a Thandwe resident and has been living in Yangon for 7 years.

At the gathering, shops selling Rakhine traditional foods, costumes and crops from gardens are crowded with the peoples.

Thandwe District Association (Yangon) was founded in 1945.— Min Thit (MNA)
CHILDREN’s literature festivals were held in many towns including Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Taunggyi and Monywa. Botataung Township No. 6 Basic Education High School will host the festival from 6th to 8 January, 2018.

The festival, which is jointly organized by Ministry of Information and Yangon Region Government, is aimed at improving the children’s creativity, cultural skills and building book reading habits through which they can find happiness in their ways of live. Following is the excerpts of the interview with those who are arranging the festival.

U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, Headmaster, BEHS-6, Botataung

The first reason why we hold this festival is we want to hone the intellectual skills of the children because they are future leaders of the country. The second reason is, to develop their creativity and the third is to improve their verbal and physical manners. We hope they will have a habit of reading and can find happiness in reading.

The festival includes, poem reciting, story telling, extempore talks, literary talks, literary discussion, painting contest, several games including team building, science and house building.

In the festival, publish houses will sell books on child literature.

As a special program, several events including storytelling, extempore talks and poem reciting for the disabled children are also included.

U Thein Swe
Chairman, School Board of Trustees

Not only children but also parents should participate in this festival. Only then, parents will know ideas for how to nurture and cultivate their children.

When children get the habit of reading, they will have patriotic spirit and gain general knowledge through reading. The festival is the investment for our children which will become leaders of our country in the future.

For their amusement, folk games are included in the festival. Traditional orchestra and Kyaukse elephant dances will perform in this festival. Old students of this school will also entertain the visitors with songs.

U Khin Maung Oo
Chairman of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce (UMFCC)

We requested the government to lower the maximum bank lending interest rate and minimum bank deposit rate at the 13th regular meeting between local businesspersons and Vice-President U Myint Swe on Saturday.

The businesspersons asked the authorities to reduce the maximum bank lending interest rate from 13 % to 10 % and the minimum bank deposit rate from 8 % to 5 %.

The existing 13-per-cent bank lending interest rate has become a major burden for entrepreneurs. Local businesspersons are not in a position to compete with foreign companies due to high interest rate.

Businesspersons said the bank lending interest rate should be acceptable to private entrepreneurs in order that they can compete with those in ASEAN member countries along with the implementation of ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

U Zaw Min Win, president of the UMFCC, said: “According to the current economic condition, the country will see an increase in productivity and more employment opportunities and the economy will bounce back only after banks reduce their lending interest rates to a reasonable level.” We would like to request officials to decrease the interest rate after seeking advice from scholars.”

Entrepreneurs say that Myanmar’s economy is expected to be active again next year if private firms get bank loans at a reasonable interest rate.

High interest rate hampers the availability of loans although the current government has prioritized the access to finance for the businesspersons obtain loans.

Due to the 8-per-cent bank deposit rate, the majority of people choose to deposit their money at banks instead of making investments in businesses.

U Than Lwin, senior consultant of the Kanbawza Bank, who also served as former Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) and Technical Assistant to Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said: “It is the right time to reduce bank interest rates.

Entrepreneurs are facing difficulties as the current interest rates are higher than those in the neighbouring countries. Based on the market conditions and responses, the central bank is to reduce interest rates gradually.

It is impossible to reduce interest rates from eight to five per cent immediately. Thanks to the gradual reductions in interest rates, a bank run will not occur. It should be done after consultations with experts.”

U Shein Win, vice-chairman of Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Association, requested the authorities to revive the new rules and regulations issued by the Central Bank in July that allows entrepreneurs to borrow banks’ three-year term loan with the rule to pay back the loan plus interest every three months. There will be huge impacts on the majority of businesses although rules and regulations are good in the long run.

The government has also sent invitations. The festival ensures closer teacher-student relations. Moreover children will know more about the benefits of reading and enhance their habit of reading. The festival will give satisfaction, enjoyment and intellectual development.

U Khin Maung Oo
Old Student
St. Paul School
We, St. Paul Old Students’ Association, will stage a booth in this festival. This school began in 1880, and turns 157th anniversary this year. Leaders, intellectuals and intelligentsia emerged from this school. so, we will stage a booth so that new generation can envy them.—MNA

Businesspersons request gov’t to reduce lending and deposit rates

May Thein Hnin

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YBS-16 express bus catches fire on Yangon-Mandalay expressway

AN express bus No. 16 operating under the Yangon Bus Services, bus transport network system burst into flames on Yangon-Mandalay expressway in Kyaukdaiga Township in Bago Region on Saturday early morning. Heading towards Bagan from Yangon, the bus being driven by Min Min, 29, with other 40 commuters, including four monks and 17 women, on board was badly damaged by fire between mile posts No. 99/3 and 99/4 at around 1 a.m. on that day. All people from the bus including the driver escaped from the fire. However, wide parts of the bus engulfed in flames. The loss due to the fire is estimated to reach about Ks20 million.

The fire was believed to have started from the engine, investigators say.—Min Ma Naing (Sittoung)
Colin Trevorrow planning ‘Jurassic World 3’

LONDON — Director Colin Trevorrow is game for a third movie in the “Jurassic World” series and says the manner which the forthcoming film, “Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom” ends, it makes way for another movie.

The 41-year-old filmmaker said the second feature will not end on a cliffhanger but give rise to the trilogy in the franchise, FemaleFirst reported.

“At the end of this movie, it’s not a cliffhanger, but it’s designed for people to want to know what’s going to happen next, whereas the earlier ‘Jurassic Park’ movies had pretty clear definitive endings. They were much more episodic. “In working with Derek Connolly, my co-writer, we were also thinking about where it was going to go in the future,” Trevorrow said in an interview published on YouTube by Sebas Tabany.

Asked about a third chapter, he said he knew the direction he wanted the story to move in and also discussed it with original “Jurassic Park” franchise director, Steven Spielberg.

“Yes, absolutely... I knew where I wanted it to go. I remember telling Steven even while we were still making the first movie, ‘This is the beginning. Here is the middle. And here’s the end of the end. This is where we want to go’. — PTI

James Norton says he is not in race for Bond role

LONDON — Actor James Norton has once again said that he is not in the race to take on the role of James Bond after Daniel Craig’s last outing as the beloved spy.

The “Happy Valley” actor, who is being considered as one of the top contenders for the iconic role, said he feels humbled to be considered along side Tom Hardy and Michael Fassbender, reported Metro.

Talking about the opening scene of his new show “McMafia”, where the actor wears a tuxedo, Norton said, “I did say to James Watkins, the director, are you just baiting me and stoking the rumour fire with scenes like that? When it’s reported in the press, people assume that I’ve co-ordinated the scene, but I promise you I didn’t. The truth is that it’s total speculation.”

“It’s really humbling and flattering, but to have my name next to the likes of Tom Hardy and Michael Fassbender is just mad. If you’re thinking of putting a bet on me, keep your money in your pocket,” he added.—PTI

Ed Sheeran is ‘little obsessed’ with Robbie Williams

LONDON — Ed Sheeran said he has developed a “little obsession” for singer Robbie Williams.

The 26-year-old singer said that his career path has similarities with that of Williams’.

“I feel a weird affinity with Robbie. We email now and then but I’ve been reading up on him and his career is so similar to mine,” Sheeran told The Sun.

“As the way the album’s going, the way it went to stadiums, the way it was just like one lone man... a very lonely sort of life. I have a little obsession with him and working out how he did stuff.—PTI

Yearender: Bollywood stars came crashing down to earth in 2017

MUMBAI — Bollywood ended another lacklustre year with fewer box office hits and no solution in sight to address failing theatre footfalls. The industry’s woes were compounded by falling data costs in a booming mobile phone market, the increasing popularity of streaming services and the crumbling of the star system, the dependence on the star and the once safe option of casting an A-list star.

The second installment, which released in April this year, saw audiences flocked to see CGI-enhanced palaces, rampaging armies and magical kingdoms, all woven into a story around Indian mythology. “If a genre doesn’t need a star, then it needs technology. We don’t have that genre. In Hollywood, out of the top 15 films, 10 will be super-hero or franchise films. There, the dependence on the star system has reduced because they’ve made technology the hero,” Kapoor said.— Reuters
**Greek bakers wish Happy New Year with 2.5-ton special cake**

The special cake “Vassilopita” is on display in a street in Athens, Greece, on 30 December 2017. Greek bakers sent their wishes for a Happy 2018 to the world on Saturday by making and offering for free to the citizens of Athens a 2.5-ton “Vassilopita”, the special cake usually served at all households in Greece after midnight on New Year’s day. PHOTO: XINHUA

**Fans flock to Space World as amusement park reaches final frontier**

Fans flocked to the Space World amusement park in Kitakyushu in southwestern Japan’s Fukuoka Prefecture, on 31 December 2017, before the facility closes its gates for the last time after 27 years of business. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

**Polish group aims for history by winter scaling of world’s second highest peak**

ISLAMABAD — A group of Polish mountaineers set off for northern Pakistan on Sunday to start an attempt to be the first to scale K2, the world’s second highest peak, in wintertime.

K2, in the Karakorum mountains along the border between China and Pakistan, is notorious for high winds, steep and icy slopes — and high fatality rates for climbers. In winter months, scant snowfall means the summit approach can turn into bare ice.

More than 70 people have died climbing the peak, many of them at the Bottleneck, where a wrong step can send a climber hurtling off the South Face, where bodies are unlikely to be recovered. Team member Adam Bielecki, 34, told Reuters that the chance to make history is a “strong motivation” for the Polish group.

Polish climbers have written a “beautiful chapter” of exploring peaks of more than 8,000 metres (26,247 feet), and scaling K2 in winter would “the last chapter of this book”.

The Polish team comprises 13 mountaineers led by Krzysztof Wielicki, 67, who in 2001 headed a winter expedition of K2, which was unable to clear the 8,000 meter threshold.

K2, slightly shorter than Mount Everest, is 8,611 meters (28,251 feet) high. Wielicki told Reuters that his team would begin their ascent on 8 or 9 January and, if successful, expect to return to base camp by mid-March. — Reuters
SALAH FIRES LIVERPOOL TO VICTORY, CHELSEA CLOSE GAP AT TOP

LONDON — Mohamed Salah took his goal tally to 23 in all competitions with a second-half double to help Liverpool come from behind to beat Leicester City 2-1 at Anfield in the Premier League on Saturday.

Salah had no such struggles at home to Stoke City, with Mark Hughes’ men thrashed 5-0 at Stamford Bridge, as the league’s most porous defence couldn’t cope with their rampant hosts.

Chelsea climbed to second, above Manchester United, after Jose Mourinho’s men were held to their third successive draw following a 0-0 stalemate against Southampton at Old Trafford in Saturday’s late kick-off.

Romelu Lukaku was carried off on a stretcher in the first half and United looked toothless in attack in the Belgium international’s absence, mustering just three shots on target.

A win for neighbours Manchester City at Crystal Palace on Sunday will see Pep Guardiola’s men move 16 points clear at the top of the standings and 17 ahead of United.

One of the performances of the day came at Vicarage Road where Swansea City netted two late goals to come from behind to beat Watford and climb off the bottom of the table, as Carlos Carvalhal’s tenure got off to a winning start.

However, the spotlight once again was on Liverpool striker Salah, who continues to look unstoppable in front of goal.

Jamie Vardy once again scored against a “big six” side after being picked out by Riyad Mahrez in the first half at Anfield, and Leicester held on until Salah took centre stage.

Two neat second-half finishes took the Egypt international to 17 for the season, one behind Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane, with the goals sealing the victory that sees Liverpool move to 12 unbeaten in the league – their best run under Juergen Klopp – and opens up a four-point gap over Spurs in fifth.

“He (Salah) can keep this standard for sure, he’s young, improving – it’s not only about scoring goals,” Klopp said.

“He’s so important for us. He knows and I know he couldn’t score so many without the fantastic support from the other boys. I think he can keep the standard.”

Four points ahead of Liverpool, Chelsea were out of sight after 23 minutes against Stoke with goals from Antonio Rudiger, Danny Drinkwater and Pedro putting the champions in command.

Willian’s second-half penalty and a Davide Zappacosta goal put the seal on a fourth win in five league games for Antonio Conte’s men.

“We know we must continue to work and improve, and prepare for a very difficult game against Arsenal,” said Conte, whose second-placed side are now 13 points behind Manchester City. “Every win is important for us, today it was important to get three points to continue our positive run.” —Reuters

SHARP FEDERER GIVES SWITZERLAND WINNING START AT HOPMAN CUP

PERTH — Roger Federer dismissed Japan’s Yuichi Sugita 6-4, 6-3 in just over an hour on Saturday to give Switzerland a winning start at the Hopman Cup and send out a signal to his opponents ahead of next month’s Australian Open.

Coming off a fruitful year which yielded two grand slam titles, world number two Federer looked fit and sharp while other members of tennis’ ‘Big Four’ are grappling with injury issues.

Federer hurried to save a break point in his first game but otherwise did not have any trouble against the 29-year-old Sugita, whom he broke in the fifth game, and there was no looking back from there. “It’s been an absolute dream run,” the Swiss said, looking back at the year. “It’s gone by too fast to be honest, you know. When you’ve having fun things go too fast but what a year it has been, (I) could not be happier.

“Such a huge surprise. I’m healthy, had a great off-season, so pleased to have the year that I had.” The 19-times grand slam winner, who will be defending his title at Melbourne Park next month, was happy with the way he coped with the demands of the game. “I feel the game has evolved again in the last 10 years or so. I have made some adjustments to my game, I’m trying to hit through the backhand a bit more, maybe I have a bit more pop on the serve and naturally the whole rally has changed because you have different options.

“I think I’m playing very well, otherwise I wouldn’t be having the results that I’m having. I’m happy I’m still playing at this level. I was always hoping to play for a long time and I’m doing that.” —Reuters

EDESRON’S PENALTY SAVE PRESERVES CITY’S UNBEATEN RECORD

LONDON — Crystal Palace, who missed a stoppage-time penalty became only the second team to take points off Manchester City in the Premier League this season when they held the runaway leaders to a 0-0 draw at Selhurst Park on Sunday.

City, who drew 1-1 with Everton in August, extended their unbeaten run to 21 matches, the longest run in the league this season. They have been under pressure coming off back to back losses to West Ham and Arsenal and will have been pleased with a goalless draw.

City started brightly and were close to scoring early in the second half when Raheem Sterling brought down Wilfried Zaha but normally reliable Luka Milivojevic had his spot kick saved by Ederson.

With Palace defending high and breaking fast, the closest that City came to a goal was when substitute striker Sergio Aguero’s shot took a slight deflection off a defender and hit the post midway through the first half.

Aguero had come on for Gabriel Jesus, who was the second player to come off injured after Palace captain Scott Dann — and the third altogether with City playmaker Kevin De Bruyne carried off in added time. —Reuters