President hosts 70th Anniversary Independence Day dinner

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw and First Lady Daw Su Su Lwin hosted a dinner in commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of Independence Day in the front lawn of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening. The President and First Lady arrived at the dinner at 6:30 pm and cordially greeted the guests individually.

Independence Day celebrated in Maungtaw, Buthidaung

A STATE flag hoisting ceremony to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Independence Day was held at the Myoma playground in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State yesterday morning, with district and township department officials, ward, village administrators, and the public in attendance.

The attendees saluted the country’s flag and district administrators read out a message sent by President U Htin Kyaw in recognition of the 70th Independence Day.

“The event aims to mark the anniversary of Independence Day and also promote equestrian sports. Some of the athletes who compete here will go on to compete in international events”, said U Zaw Min Htway, deputy director of the Sports and Physical Education Department.

Sports competitions including futsal football, cane ball, tug-of-war, a 100-metre event for children, as well as a 500-metre event were held.

Similarly, a grand ceremony was held at the General Administration Department in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State to mark the 70th anniversary of Independence Day yesterday.— Zayya and Myint Maung
Nay Pyi Taw celebrates 70th Independence Day

THE flag hoisting and saluting ceremony, to mark the 70th anniversary of Independence Day, was held yesterday morning in front of the Nay Pyi Taw City Hall.

The ceremony was held with the aim to safeguard and protect the stability of the Union National Solidarity and Perpetuation of Sovereignty by the entire ethnic people; to work for the emergence of a constitution that meets democratic norms and can guarantee a democratic federal union; to work harder to implement a peace process; to reach the goal of “eternal peace” through political dialogue, by ensuring cooperation between all national races of the Union and the Union Government; and to work to promote the private sector, which is the driving force for the economic of the country.

The 2018 70th Anniversary Independence Day State Flag hoisting ceremony was held with the flag hoisting platoon raising the flag at 4:20 a.m.

At 6 a.m., Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Union Ministers, union level organisations, high ranking Tatmadaw officers, the 2018 70th Anniversary Independence Day State Flag hoisting and saluting ceremony organisation sub-committee chairman and member, deputy ministers, invited guests, departmental officials from the ministries, officers and troops from the Pobbatthiri cantonment, Red Cross and fire department officials, as well as the local populace, assembled at the designated staging areas and took their places in front of the Nay Pyi Taw City Hall, where the State Flag hoisting ceremony was held.

At 6:45 a.m., the 2018 70th Anniversary Independence Day State Flag hoisting ceremony began with the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) Guard of Honour contingent marching into the area in front of the City Hall to take up their positions.

Next, Vice President U Myint Swe, in his capacity as chairman of the central committee for the 70th Independence Day celebration, took his place on the dais and received the salute of the Guard of Honour.

The Vice President, Guard of Honour and the people in attendance then saluted the Republic of Union of Myanmar State Flag, while the Tatmadaw Guard of Honour band played the national anthem.

The Guard of Honour also saluted the nation’s martyrs and soldiers, who gave their lives for the union, and took the four-point oath.

Vice President U Myint Swe delivers the speech at the 70th Independence Day celebration in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

By Thant Zin Win & Zaw Min Latt

THE flag hoisting and saluting ceremony to mark the 70th anniversary of Independence Day was held yesterday morning in front of the Independence Monument in Maha Bandoola Park, Yangon.

The 70th Anniversary Independence Day flag hoisting ceremony was held at 4:20 a.m. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein arrived at 4:25 a.m. and received the salute of the Guard of Honour. The Yangon Region Chief Minister; the Guard of Honour and those in attendance then saluted the national flag, and recognized the nation’s martyrs and soldiers who gave their lives for the union, followed by their taking the four-point oath. Next, the Yangon Region Chief Minister read a message sent by President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the 2018 70th Anniversary Independence Day, received the salute of the Honour Guard and concluded the ceremony.

The ceremony was attended by Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Yangon Command commander Maj-Gen Thet Pone, Yangon Region Chief Judge U Win Swe, Yangon Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Yangon Region ministers, Yangon Region Advocate, Yangon Region Auditor, high ranking Tatmadaw officers, Yangon Region Hluttaw representatives, honoured guests who had strived for independence, officials from political parties, departmental officials, as well as some 5,000 ethnic nationals and local people from the districts and townships.
Ceremony to confer titles for bravery

A ceremony to confer titles for bravery was held yesterday morning in the Theater Room at the Presidential Palace, where President U Htin Kyaw spoke before conferring the honours.

In his address, the President welcomed attendees and invited guests with wishes for “mingalar” (auspiciousness), and spoke of the significance of holding the ceremony to honour bravery on Independence Day.

“Today is an unforgettable, auspicious day of independence as well as a day to honour with titles the persons who contributed their unselfish efforts with unwavering commitment to building up the nation, and those who served their country bravely without a thought for their own personal interests”, U Htin Kyaw said.

“During the time of our fathers and grandfathers, they strove to protect the sovereignty of the country and failed, so independence was lost. To become a sovereign state from being a colony was not an easy task. Unity of the ethnic nationals was built up with difficulty over many years.”

“The independence gained and sovereignty achieved through such difficulties demonstrates the heart of the people of Myanmar, and only when the sovereignty is firm and strong will all ethnic nationals be healthy in both soul and body.”

“To become an independent sovereign Republic of the Union of Myanmar was through the leadership of Bogyoke Aung San and the courage, effort and united strength of all ethnic nationals in the country. The independence achieved through the efforts of such leaders and our forefathers needs to be retained as long as this world exists through our united efforts according to tradition. At the same time, we, the Myanmar people, all have the duty to make our country modern, developed, peaceful and stable.”

“Thus, with an aim toward establishing a peaceful, modern and developed state, the sovereign powers of the country, the legislative, administrative and judicial powers are divided as much as possible so that there are checks and balances.”

“In doing this, the ceremony today is held to award titles to honourable persons who put in extraordinary contributions, disregarding their lives and limbs with firm minds, with exemplary and amazing bravery for the security of the nation, rule of law, peace and stability of the area and nation building. Upon the recommendation of the scrutiny board, five Thura titles will be awarded.”

“The titles and badges conferred today are a symbol by the grateful State on recipients who have successfully overcome difficulties and obstacles in their lives. I believe the titles are a symbol of honour for their offspring as well as a driving force toward the construction of a modern and developed nation. Honouring those worthy of honour is in accord with the “mingala sutra” and the State is honouring them for their efforts toward the State.”

“In conclusion, I would like to tell all our people to participate and help in rule of law, internal peace, amending the constitution, establishing a Democratic Federal Republic so that our nation will be in existence for a long time and become modern and developed.”

“Retain the good tradition of maintaining and protecting the nation’s sovereignty and independence in unity and without regional, racial and religious prejudices. Let your examples be taken up by your offspring” said the President in conclusion.

The President then conferred the Thura bravery titles to No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Lt-Col Zaw Lwin Soe (BC-32340), No. 34 Bomber Squadron Major Zeya Tun (Air-3050), U Han Kaung, brother of No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Corporal Ye Nwam (Ta/42508), U Bo Thein, father of No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Lance Corporal Myo Chit (Ta/451109) and No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment Lance Corporal Tun Tun (Ta/451117).

The ceremony was attended by First Lady Daw Su Su Lwin, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Myint Swe and wife, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint and wife, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife, Constitutional Tribunal of Myanmar Chairperson U Myint Nyunt and wife, Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein and wife, Tatmadaw Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Commander-in-Chief (Armed Forces) Vice Senior General Soe Win and wife, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Khun Myat and wife, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and wife, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw’s Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Chairman Thura U Shwe Mann and wife, Union Ministers, Union Attorney General, Union Auditor General, Union Civil Service Board Chairman, Chief-of-Staff (Army, Navy, Air), senior officers from Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office and their wives, Hluttaw Affairs committee chairmen and Hluttaw representatives, Deputy Ministers, recipients of the bravery titles and their family members.—Myanmar News Agency
70th Anniversary Independence Day ceremony held at National League for Democracy (Headquarter, HQ) in Bahan Township, Yangon yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, the State Flag, Bogoyoke Aung San and the martyrs were saluted and then stay in silence for 8 seconds in memory of the monks, people and students who lost their lives in the democracy revolution.

In his opening speech, the chairman of the central and executive committee secretariat member U Nyan Win said “National independence is the symbol of the unity of all ethnic nationals while the standard and value of national independence is having a full democracy and human rights. The aim is establishing a democracy federal union. Now is the time to discard the bad legacy of the past and establish unity, peace and democracy federal union in a spirit of national reconciliation.

For the future of the State, it is built by uniting and coming together with the same worries, differences and suspicions will be reduced and disappear. Opportunities will be discovered from challenges.”

He continued and said “Respectfully returning the favors of the people, ethnic national leaders and Bogoyoke Aung San who sacrificed for independence and in honor of the nine points and note included in the independence declaration.”

Next, a seven-point Independence Day declaration of the Central Executive Committee was read by central committee member central information committee secretary Monywa Aung Shin and messages sent by (political) parties, organisations and embassies were put on record.

The ceremony was attended by NLD central executive committee secretariat member, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Hluttaw representatives, diplomats, political parties, civil society organisations and invited guests.—Zaw Gyi

Myingyan Combined-Cycle Gas Turbine Power Plant begins feeding 143MW to National Grid

THE Myingyan Combined-Cycle Gas Turbine Power Plant has begun distributing 143 megawatts (MW) to the National Grid, according to a report yesterday in the Mawyady Daily.

The Sembcorp Myingyan Power Company Limited has signed a build-operate-transfer (BOT) agreement with the Ministry of Electricity and Energy of Myanmar for its upcoming 225-megawatt power project in Mandalay. Under the agreement, Sembcorp Myingyan Power Company will build and operate the power plant for 22 years, after which the facility will be transferred to the Myanmar government.

The plant will be built with two high-efficiency gas turbines and waste heat generators, which will generate a capacity of 225 MW. In the first phase, the Myingyan Power Plant will distribute 143 MW to the National Grid. After the completion of the gas turbine project, the Sembcorp factory began operating the turbine last week.

Starting January 1, two gas turbines began generating power regularly, said Dr. Tin Naing, deputy minister for Electricity and Energy. The Myingyan Combined-Cycle Gas Turbine Power Plant project was begun on March 29, 2016. The Sembcorp Myingyan Power Project will become one of Myanmar’s largest gas-fired power plants, and will play a key role in meeting the country’s growing demand for electricity.—GNLM

Yellow-breasted bunting added to critically endangered species

Yellow-breasted bunting, a migratory bird often found in Myanmar was added to critically endangered species, according to WCS Myanmar.

The migratory bird had been put in the list of endangered species in 2013 and now added to critically endangered species later about five years. According to the IUCN Red List, there were about 200,000 yellow-breasted bunting globally in 2004. But the number has decreased from 120 to 600 in 2017. A sharp decrease in the number of the rare bird is largely due to poaching and loss of habitats, said U Thet Zaw Naing, a scholar from the WCS Myanmar.

A total of 61 yellow-breasted bunting were found in Ayeyawady delta region, ten in Bangan, and some in other regions such as Inlay, Indawgyi, and Kalaw.—Myanmar Digital News
MPTA to request govt to scale down sulphur levels

The Myanmar Petroleum Trade Association (MPTA) will submit a proposal to the Ministry of Electricity and Energy asking it to reduce the sulphur content from 500 ppm (parts per million) to 10 ppm in diesel fuel, said Dr Win Myint, secretary of MPTA.

“Once we get the approval from our association members in the upcoming meeting, we will submit the request within a month,” he added.

Many countries keep the content of sulphur in ultra low diesel or premium diesel to minimise the fuel’s environmental impact. “The consumption of high sulphur diesel results in high level of pollutants. The number of vehicles on the country’s roads is increasing, prompting us to call for this proposal to prevent severe levels of air pollution,” said Dr Win Myint.

Previously, the country consumed diesel having 5,000 ppm of sulphur, and later reduced the level to 500 ppm. Premium diesel with 10 ppm is also imported and distributed in the domestic market.

The percentage of those consuming this premium diesel has increased from 10 to 30 per cent. Some 90 per cent of the fuel oil consumption in the country is dependent on the foreign market, while only 10 per cent is produced locally.

“There is only a small price gap of Ks20 between 500 ppm and 10 ppm per litre. This is why we want to scale down the sulphur level to 10 ppm, as it will not affect the market. In addition to this, it will also help reduce the environmental impact. We will conduct publicity campaigns to encourage the public to consume premium diesel,” said Dr Win Myint.

There are some 70 fuel oil importing companies in the country, along with 2,000 fuel stations, with the fuel mostly imported through Singapore. Some 200,000 tonnes of gasoline and 400,000 tonnes of diesel are imported into the country every month.

Gasoline consumption in Myanmar increased six fold over the past five years. Nevertheless, diesel consumption does not show a significant increase, and even declined slightly.

Profit-sharing between rubber employers, employees fixed at 4:6 ratio

The rubber farming industry is planning to introduce a 4:6 profit-sharing system between rubber employers and employees, according to a report in the Myawady Daily yesterday.

This system is mainly practised in rubber plantations in Thailand, as well as in China, Malaysia and Viet Nam. “The current system does not work well for rubber plantation owners, especially when the rubber price declines. Employers are not in a position to pay more salaries to workers. This system will be beneficial to both the employers and employees. Therefore, we are making an arrangement to put in place the profit-sharing system next year,” said U Shwe Kyi, a rubber plantation owner from Thatone Township, Mon State.

In this system, both the employers and employees will have to contribute towards agricultural costs, including for fertilisers and clearance of grass areas.

This system will be beneficial for both employers and the employees when rubber prices are high, but this system will impact both when the rubber price drops.—GNLM

Pyapon post office earns Ks17.1 million within nine months

THE Pyapon post office earned Ks17,135,386 from April to December in 2017-2018 fiscal year (FY), according to Dar Moe Thin, the post officer at the Pyapon post office.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications had expected to earn Ks13.5 million from the Pyapon post office. However, its revenue exceeded the targeted income.

The Pyapon post office provides services, including sale of stamps, express and overseas courier services, fax messages, and acceptance and receipt of money invoices and quick cash invoices.

Previously, the Pyapon post office had provided its services in 15 townships. Starting in October 2017, the Pyapon post office has been providing services to some 299 townships. Therefore, its income has increased this fiscal year, said officials.—Aung Win (Pyapon)

**Claim’s Day Notice**

**M.V Ever Ally Voy. No. ( )**

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V Ever Ally Voy. No. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5-1-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. —SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185
President U Htin Kyaw held a ceremony in the Theatre Room of the Presidential Palace to present titles for bravery, on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on January 4, yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, President U Htin Kyaw bestowed five Thura military titles. The following is an interview with the recipients, as well as those who accepted the titles on behalf of the recipients.

Lt. Col Thura Zaw Lwin Soe, No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I am Lt. Col Thura Zaw Lwin Soe. I am Commander of No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment. My troops and I fought in an engagement for the sovereignty of the nation, and I was presented with this award for this reason. In that engagement, I led the point section to charge into an enemy camp, as they fired fiercely. A few men in my unit, and I, sustained light wounds, but we fought the enemy without giving them any respite, and we won.

I was proud to put my life on the line to protect the Union from disintegration. The main point is to have an understanding. If there is understanding and trust, there will be peace. What I want to say from the bottom of my heart is that Tatmadaw personnel, like us, most hope for peace. We fought in the battles to protect the sovereignty of our country. I think all will understand this. I am an ethnic Karen national. I am still serving in the Tatmadaw. I have no racial thoughts. I am serving for the perpetual existence of the Union. Thus, I would like to tell all to stay united and prevent the disintegration of the Union.

U Han Kaung, brother of Corporal Thuya Ye Nwam (Killed in Action), No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I come on behalf of my brother to accept the award. I was bereaved when I heard about his death. However, I felt happy and proud when I heard that he has been posthumously awarded this title. I do not think this is a title that he received for himself. I think he received it on behalf of the entire No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment. Both my brother and I are Naga nationals.

Even though I lost a brother, I am proud he served our country.

Major Thura Zeya Tun, Namhsam Air Base

I am Major Thura Zeya Tun. I am now serving as flight safety officer at Namhsam Air Base. During the Mongko region battles in northeastern Shan, when the northern alliance attacked, I was responsible for providing air support with my fighter aircraft. I am happy to be awarded the Thura title, because I accomplished the duty assigned to me.

The anti-aircraft fire from the enemy damaged my aircraft. I did not want to lose a valuable aircraft belonging to the Tatmadaw, and I did not want the enemy to gain a moral victory by bringing down my plane. I also did not want the forces on the ground to weaken their morale, if my plane went down. With the spirit that “my camp will not be overrun without my death,” I succeeded in flying my damaged plane back to base.

What I want to tell my other brother pilots here is to help our other brothers-in-arms in the Tatmadaw (Army) and Tatmadaw (Navy) and other Tatmadaw forces with the best of our Tatmadaw (Air) ability. This is the main duty of Tatmadaw (Air).

U Bo Thein, father of Lance Corporal Thura Myo Chit (Killed in Action), No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I come to accept this title on behalf of my son, Myo Chit. I am proud of my son, who defended the country with his life. I am proud that the President is awarding this title to my son. I received some compensation and entitlements. I will spend all of this in his memory. He was keen to serve in the military. When he was young, he would go to look after the cows with his mother and, while doing so, he would play at being a soldier. He wanted to be a soldier, even when he was young. I didn’t even know when he went to enlist. However, he left word with his friend saying that he would return.

I am sad because he is my son, but I am also happy. I am proud of his bravery. I am proud that he was awarded the Thura title. He was hit twice. In the first battle, he was wounded, but in the second one, we lost him.

Lance Corporal Thura Tun Tun, No. 386 Light Infantry Regiment

I am proud and honoured. I have lost friends in battles, but they didn’t receive awards. This is the fourth time I was in a battle. This one was memorable. I never had the experience of over-running such a large position. I participated in the attack with my friends, and did the part I was told to do. I took up my position when I reached the destination, and those following me were able to follow us with ease.

I felt sad for my friends. My friends were among those who lost their lives. I was not hit. It is memorable that we were able to hit the enemy hard. I cannot describe my happiness on being awarded this title.—News Team
President hosts 70th Anniversary Independence Day dinner

FROM PAGE 1
Present at the dinner were State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr Shwe Hlwan, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint and wife Daw Cho Cho, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Mahn Win Khin Than and wife Daw Nang Kyin Kyi, Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo, Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt and wife Daw Htay Yoe, Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thida, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win and wife Daw Than Than Nwe, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U T Khan Myat and wife, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung and wife, Chairman of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann and wife, union ministers, the Union Attorney general, the Union Auditor General, the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board, the Chairman of the Peace Commission, the Chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, Central Bank of Myanmar Governor, Joint Chief of Staff (Army, Navy, Air), Anti-corruption Commission Chairman and senior military officers and their wives, chairman of Hluttaw affairs committees, deputy ministers, Hluttaw representatives, representatives of political parties, departmental heads, diplomats of foreign missions and their wives and Resident Representative of UNDP and Heads of UN agencies and their wives, titles and honours recipients and their families and invited guests.

During the dinner, fireworks were set off nearby and the Myanmar Radio and Television presented entertainment programmes before and during the dinner. After the dinner, the President, First Lady and guests were entertained by the Myanmar Radio modern music troupe and artists from the Department of Fine Arts, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.—Myanmar News Agency

SG Min Aung Hlaing attends ceremony to hand out medals, certificates

TATMADAW Commander-in-Chief Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing addressed a ceremony held yesterday afternoon in Zeyathiri Beikman, Nay Pyi Taw, to present medals and certificates to military personnel for their valor in battle.

The Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief said people who received military medals and certificates were those who had put on record their noble thoughts and beliefs, while accomplishing their assigned national security duties with valour and bravery. The Tatmadaw and the State proudly honours and remembers them as courageous and worthy sons of the country.

Next, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief awarded military medals and certificates to 25 Tatmadaw personnel and 15 next-of-kin of those who had died in battle.

As of January 2018, there were six recipients of the Aung San Thuriya Medal, 47 recipients of the Thiha Thura Medal, 547 recipients of the Thura Medal, six recipients of the Thiha Bala Medal, 1,862 recipients of the Record of Gallantry, 1,887 recipients of the Gallantry Medal, 335 recipients of the Commander-in-Chief Gallantry Certificate, 2,605 recipients of the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Honours Certificate, two recipients of the Commander-in-Chief Honours Certificate and 1,087 recipients of the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Honours Certificate. —Myanmar News Agency
The Global New light of Myanmar

The 70th anniversary of independence is a great milestone in the history of our country. This day is the occasion to pay tribute to all those who contributed to the independence struggle, and to reaffirm our commitment to upholding the principles of democracy. The 70 years of Myanmar's independence have been marked by significant achievements and challenges. The country has made strides in social and economic development, but it has also faced numerous challenges, including political instability and conflict.

Myanmar is a nation with a rich history and culture, and its people have a deep sense of identity and pride in their country. The independence struggle was fought by countless heroes, who sacrificed their lives for the cause of freedom and self-determination. Their legacy continues to inspire generations, and their memory is enshrined in the hearts and minds of all Myanmar people.

Today, we celebrate the 70th anniversary of independence with a sense of pride and hope for the future. We are committed to upholding the principles of democracy, peace, and prosperity, and to fostering a brighter and more prosperous future for our nation. We are determined to work together to overcome the challenges that lie ahead and to build a strong and prosperous Myanmar.

In this year of national celebration, we are reminded of the sacrifices made by our forefathers, and we are encouraged to continue the struggle for justice, peace, and prosperity. We are committed to working for the good of all Myanmar citizens, and we are confident that with the support of the international community, we can achieve the goals of democracy, peace, and prosperity for our nation.

On this special day, let us reflect on the past and look forward to the future. Let us honor the memory of those who fought for independence, and let us strive to build a brighter and more prosperous future for our country. Together, we can create a better future for Myanmar, a future of peace, prosperity, and freedom for all.

Keep Our Independence Perpetuated

The State Flag being unfurled to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Independence yesterday. PHOTO: MYANMAR POST"
Children’s Literature Festival to be held 6-8 January in Yangon

With the intention of nurturing children and instilling in them the love of reading, the Children’s Literature Festival, will be held from 6-8 January at the Basic Education High School No. 6 Botataung (St. Paul) in Yangon.

The Children’s Literature Festival is jointly organised by the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education and the Yangon Region Government. Any interested children and parents are invited to attend. The festival will be open from 9 a.m to 8 p.m. During the festival, many activities such as a story-telling competition, poem-reciting competitions, a painting competition, literature talks, talk shows, debates and entertainment programmes will be included. Educational booths organised by state high schools and private schools will include quiz tests. Other interesting activities such as elephant dancing and puppet shows will be presented.

“Book stalls for book lovers will be opened along the corner of the school during the festival. ‘We aim at nurturing the children who will be the future leaders and who possess intelligence, creativity, verbal skills and a love of literature. Everyone is welcome to join this festival’, said U Ye Naing, Director-General of the News and Periodicals Enterprise. Several Children's Literature festivals have been successfully held in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Taunggyi and Monywa. — Chan Myae Thu

Interviewing officials of Children’s Literature Festival Yangon

San Min Aung

The Children’s literature festival Yangon will be held from 6-8 January, 2018 at the Basic Education High School No. 6 Botataung (St. Paul).

Officials of the festival were interviewed about preparations for the festival.

Daw Myint Myint Soe (a) Daw May Soe, Pyithu Hluttaw Representative

This festival has been jointly organized by the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Education and Yangon Region Government, and will be held at the Basic Education High School No. 6 Botataung. I’m very happy that this festival will be held in my township. As a Hluttaw representative, I participated in and helped in all areas of the festival.

Children, nowadays, spend most of their time playing games (on computers and mobile phones) and watching TV. In fact, they should be playing (physically) with their friends from school. We want them to know the joy and fun they’ll have if they do this, as in the past. But children nowadays do not play this way. By holding this sort of festival, children will know they can be happy playing (physically) together. Their thoughts will be better and they’ll learn more.

This festival is good for their future. All are invited to come and join the festival, which will include fun and games, along with educational and knowledge-activities for them. Parents shouldn’t worry about sending their children, as it will be totally safe. Responsible personnel from the government, security personnel and representatives, like me, will be there all the time.

Teachers will be there, too. So, all are invited to come and join.

Daw Moe Moe, Principal of Amae Eain (Mother’s House) Private School

I am responsible for a stand at the festival. It is an anatomy stand. We’ll show children and parents how our body parts work and function. Biology is not only for high school students. We’ll make models of hearts and lungs, and show young children where these are in their bodies.

The development of children not only needs the support of the government, but also from parents, as well. Parents need to make their children spend time with books, instead of on mobile phone (games). Schools also need to force students to go to libraries. It is hoped that the children who come to the festival will be inspired by what other children display there. We will treat the visiting children with Myanmar snacks. This is to promote the theme of “Eat Myanmar snacks to have good health.” Instead of saying don’t eat foreign or spicy foods, we will show how good Myanmar snacks are. We’ll treat all visiting children with Myanmar snacks throughout the entire three days of the festival.

Daw Swe Zin, International Children School, Yangon

Actually I’m not from the teaching department. I’m from the management side. Commenting as a person from the education circle, it is very important to create in children the interest to read. There are many ways to create this interest. All these will be shown at the festival. Our mayor asked us about how we can participate as private schools. The time we had was short, with many holidays. So we plan to inform the children about what we are teaching. But by participating this time, we also have more understanding of what we can show, if this festival is held again. There will be much about physical games, which can be learnt from books. On the mental part, more can be learnt from books. I think children will realize that they can learn so many things from books. In order to create this realization, I want to say ‘Bring your children to the festival.’

Tatmadaw captures KIA posts

The KIA armed group’s camps in Kachin State allegedly used for smuggling have been discovered and overtaken, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief’s Office said yesterday.

Armed groups from the KIA have long been suspected of smuggling valuable natural resources in Kachin State, Bhamo District,MANSEIKI-GAIKHATATE region to other countries, according to the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief’s Office.

Tatmadaw columns have conducted operations since 13 November 2017 in an area about 25 miles southwest of Namkham Town, and “there were some engagements”, the commander-in-chief’s office said.

On 27 November 2017, the armed group near Manein Village, Manweingyi village tract, opened fire and attacked the Tatmadaw’s administrative helicopter.

Tatmadaw columns subsequently conducted security operations in the area, where some KIA smuggling camps were discovered and taken over. — Myanmar News Agency.
Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Mr. Xi Jinping,
President of People’s Republic of China,
Distinguished Mr. President,

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; on behalf of the Chinese Government and Chinese people and in my own name, I extend my warm congratulations and best wishes to you, your government and your people.

Last year, under the leadership of you and Myanmar government, Myanmar has made significant achievements in maintaining stability, developing economy, promoting peace process and expanding foreign exchanges. China is pleased to see your country’s progress.

Presently, China-Myanmar relation is gaining a sound momentum of healthy and stable development. Last year, we held a fruitful meeting, reaching important new consensus on promoting China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, which will guide the development of bilateral relations in the next phase. I place great importance on China-Myanmar relations and wish to work with you to further promote the development of China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, bringing more benefits to our two countries and two peoples.

May your country enjoy prosperity and your people happiness.

May you good health and wish you all the best.

From Mr. Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma
President of the Republic of South Africa,
Your Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the celebration of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 04 January 2018, the Government and people of the Republic of South Africa join me in conveying to Your Excellency, the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, warmest greetings and sincere congratulations.

May I take this opportunity to express the wish for Your Excellency’s good health and also reaffirm our desire to further enhance and consolidate the excellent bond of friendship that exists between our countries.

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

From Mr. Aleksandar Vucic
President of the Republic of Serbia
Excellency,

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I extend to you, on behalf of the people of the Republic of Serbia and on my own behalf, sincere congratulations and best wishes for further prosperity of your country and its people.

The Republic of Serbia and its people are deeply appreciative of your country’s principled position regarding non-recognition of the unilaterally declared independence of the so-called ‘Kosovo’. We perceive this position on your part, based on the respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia, as an affirmation of the genuinely friendly relations and solidarity existing between our two countries.

Drawing on the belief that our two countries are firmly committed to strengthening their bilateral relations, I trust that the cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will be enriched with new content in the coming period.

I take this opportunity to express my hope that the situation in your country will soon stabilize and that conditions will be created for the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to unimpededly develop further; to the benefit and happiness of your people.

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

From Mr. Raul Castro Ruz
President of the Councils of the State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba
President of the Councils of the State and Ministers of the Republic of Cuba
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I renew to you assurances of my highest consideration.

From Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier
President of the Federal Republic of Germany
Mr. President,

On the occasion of Independence Day in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar allow me to offer you my sincere congratulations and those of my fellow Germans. Democracy, freedom and the protection of human rights are important assets for a country’s peaceful development. Please rest assured that Germany will continue to be a reliable partner at Myanmar’s side in the future and will wholeheartedly support you as you face the challenges of democratisation that lie ahead.

I hope that your country will soon find domestic peace for all citizens, which is vital for stability, prosperity and democracy, and I wish you and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar every success and all the best for achieving this.

From Mr. Alain Berset
President of the Swiss Confederation
His Excellency,

On behalf of the Swiss Federal Council and on my own behalf, I would like to convey my warmest congratulations to you, Your Excellency, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and especially on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the independence of you country this year. I also send my sincerest wishes for the well-being and prosperity of your country and for your own good health and success.

Switzerland and Myanmar’s relations have recently been strengthened thanks to the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of our diplomatic relations and to numerous bilateral meetings which take place in 2017.

You can be assured of Switzerland’s commitment to developing the mutual trust and friendship with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, as well as to continuing supporting your country in its efforts to achieve peace, transition to democracy and sustainable socio-economic progress. We look forward to continuing this relationship and make it flourish further in the years ahead.

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

From Mr. Kim Yong Nam
President of the Presidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly
Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
Excellency,

I extend warm congratulations to you as well as to your friendly government and people on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Independence of Myanmar.

I take this opportunity to wish you greater success in your responsible work for progress and prosperity of the country.

From Mr. Phankham Viphavanh
Vice President of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic,
Your Excellency,

I have the great pleasure to express my warmest congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through you to the Government and the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am strongly confident that the existing traditional bond of friendship and close cooperation between our two countries and peoples will be further strengthened both at bilateral and multilateral levels for the progress and prosperity of our peoples.

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my heartfelt wishes to Your Excellency’s personal well-being and greater success. In your noble tasks for the continued progress of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

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

From Mr. Phankham Viphavanh
Vice President of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic,
Your Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar I have the pleasure to express my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through you to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I believe that the existing traditional friendly relations and close cooperation between our countries and peoples will be further enhanced and developed in the coming years for mutual benefits of our two countries and peoples.

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes to Your Excellency’s good health and greater success in your noble tasks for the continued prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

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

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to Vice Presidents of the Republic of Myanmar U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Mr. Phankham Viphavanh
Vice President of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic,
Your Excellency,

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my heartfelt wishes to Your Excellency’s personal well-being and greater success. In your noble tasks for the continued progress of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

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

From Mr. Phankham Viphavanh
Vice President of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic,
Your Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar I have the pleasure to express my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through you to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

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

See Page 12
From Her Majesty Elizabeth II
Queen of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, Excellency,

Your Excellency my congratulations on the celebration of your National Day, together with my best wishes for the happiness of all your country's people in the coming year.

From His Majesty Preah Bat Sandech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni
King of Cambodia, Mr President,

The celebration of the 70th Independence Day of Myanmar offers me the happy occasion to address to Mr President, Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni
Excellency,

I have found memories of your State Visit to our Kingdom in February 2017, and I congratulate the quality of relations of friendship and cooperation between our two countries.

While renewing to Your Excellency my best wishes of happiness and success, as well as for the peace and prosperity of the people of Myanmar, accept, Mr President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Bounnhang Vorachith
President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Excellency,

On behalf of the people of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and on my own behalf, I have the great pleasure to extend my heartfelt congratulations and warmest wishes to Your Excellency and through Your Excellency to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am convinced of the traditional long-standing bond of friendly relations and close cooperation between our two countries will be further strengthened and deepened in the years ahead for mutual benefits of our two peoples.

On the Occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes to Your Excellency good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

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

From H.E. Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Your Excellency,

I have the great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to Your Excellency and through Your Excellency to the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I strongly believe that our close collaboration as well as the friendly ties and cooperation between our two countries are necessary for long term stability and prosperity.

On the occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes for Your Excellency's good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks.

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

From Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika
President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Excellency the President,

On the occasion of celebration of the National Day of the Republic of Union of Myanmar. It gives me a great pleasure and I am extending to you, on behalf of the people and the government of Algeria and on my behalf, my warmest congratulations and best wishes of good health and peace to your Excellency, as well as continuous progress and prosperity to the people of Myanmar.

I also would like to seize this happy occasion, to assure you my willingness to work with you to strengthen and enhance the links of friendship and cooperation that exist between our two countries for the mutual benefit of our two peoples.

Please accept, Excellency the President, the expression of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid
President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, Excellency,

I have great pleasure to extend our warm greetings and felicitations to Your Excellency and through you to the people of Myanmar on the auspicious occasions of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The relations between our two countries are rooted in common history, heritage and centuries old people to people contact. These commonalties act as driving force in our joint efforts to address the common challenges of peace, security and development.

I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes for your good health, long life and happiness and continued peace and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

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

From Mrs. Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Excellency,

The government and the people of Bangladesh join me in extending our heartfelt greetings and felicitations to you and to the people of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Bangladesh attaches great importance to her relations with Myanmar and wishes to work together to address common challenges of peace and development for the benefit of our peoples. I sincerely hope that greater and increased cooperation between our two countries will further strengthen the bilateral relations.

On this auspicious occasion, I wish Your Excellency good health and long life and happiness and peace and prosperity for the people of Myanmar.

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

From Mr. Tran Dai Quang
President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the State, the Government and the people of Viet Nam and in our own names, we have the great honour to extend to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Myanmar our warmest congratulations.

We would like to share the happiness with the people of Myanmar on significant achievements recorded in the last seven decades. We firmly believe that, under your clear-sighted leadership, the people of Myanmar will continue to achieve greater accomplishments in the cause of national construction and development, turning Myanmar into a prosperous country with an increasing role and position in the region and the world.

We are delighted at the strong and rapid development of relations between Viet Nam and Myanmar recently. Particularly, the recent State visit to Myanmar by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong created a new milestone with the upgrading of bilateral relations to “Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership”. We look forward to closer cooperation with Your Excellency in strengthening and furthering the relationship between Viet Nam and Myanmar, in the interests of our two peoples, and for the sake of peace, stability, cooperation and development in the Asia-Pacific.

On this occasion, we wish Your Excellency good health, happiness and success in your noble position.

From Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc
Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the State, the Government and the people of Viet Nam and in our own names, we have the great honour to extend to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Myanmar our warmest congratulations.

We would like to share the happiness with the people of Myanmar on significant achievements recorded in the last seven decades. We firmly believe that, under your clear-sighted leadership, the people of Myanmar will continue to achieve greater accomplishments in the cause of national construction and development, turning Myanmar into a prosperous country with an increasing role and position in the region and the world.

We are delighted at the strong and rapid development of relations between Viet Nam and Myanmar recently. Particularly, the recent State visit to Myanmar by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong created a new milestone with the upgrading of bilateral relations to “Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership”. We look forward to closer cooperation with Your Excellency in strengthening and furthering the relationship between Viet Nam and Myanmar, in the interests of our two peoples, and for the sake of peace, stability, cooperation and development in the Asia-Pacific.

On this occasion, we wish Your Excellency good health, happiness and success in your noble position.

From Mr. Sergio Mattarella
President of the Italian Republic, Your Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day – Independence Day of your country on behalf of the people of the Slovak Republic and on my own behalf, I have a honour to convey my warmest congratulations.

May I take this occasion to wish all citizens of Myanmar peace, mutual tolerance and understanding, which are necessary for long term stability and prosperity.

I believe that the friendly relations and cooperation between the Slovene Republic and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will continue to develop in all areas of common interest and to the satisfaction of citizens of our countries.

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

From Mr. Andrej Kiska
President of the Slovak Republic, Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day – Independence Day of your country on behalf of the people of the Slovak Republic and on my own behalf, I have a honour to convey my warmest congratulations.

May I take this occasion to wish all citizens of Myanmar peace, mutual tolerance and understanding, which are necessary for long term stability and prosperity.

I believe that the friendly relations and cooperation between the Slovene Republic and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will continue to develop in all areas of common interest and to the satisfaction of citizens of our countries.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.
Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to State Counsellor

From Li Keqiang
Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of Myanmar, I extend my warm congratulations and best wishes to you, your government and your people.

We are pleased to see that in the past year your government has been committed to maintaining stability, developing economy, improving people’s livelihood and expanding foreign exchanges, all of which has brought new achievements of development.

At present, China and Myanmar are deepening political, economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation, bringing tangible benefits to the two peoples. We cherish China-Myanmar Pak-Paw friendship and wish to work with Myanmar to strengthen our traditional friendship, deepen mutually beneficial cooperation and promote China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership to a new height.

May your country enjoy prosperity and your people happiness.

May you good health and wish you all the success.

From Wang Yi
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of Myanmar, I extend my warm congratulations and best wishes to you.

We are pleased to see that last year Myanmar has made notable achievements in various undertakings. China and Myanmar have deepened exchanges and cooperation in all fields and maintained close cooperation and coordination in regional and international affairs.

I wish to work with you to implement the consensus reached by leaders of the two countries and make unremitting efforts to promote the development of China-Myanmar comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership.

May you good health and wish you all the success.

From Ms. Ana Brnabic
Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia
Her Excellency,

On the occasion of Independence Day I extend to you, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and on my own behalf, cordial congratulations and best wishes for the further successful development and overall progress of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am confident that the coming years will bring further expansion of our bilateral ties and cooperation, based on excellent political relations and friendship.

I am truly grateful for the principled support that your country lends to the preservation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Serbia, with the hope that you will continue to maintain this position in the future. I hope that conditions will be created soon for the situation in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to stabilize, enabling the country’s further unimpeded development, to the benefit of your people.

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

From Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba
Excellency,

On the occasion of commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I extend to you our cordial congratulations while ratifying our wish to continue strengthening relations between our two countries.

I renew to you assurances of my highest consideration.

From Mr. Ri Yong Ho
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
Excellency,

I extend warm congratulations to you on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Independence of Myanmar.

I take this opportunity to express my conviction that our bilateral relations of friendship and cooperation will invariably strengthen and develop.

I am strongly confident that the existing long-standing traditional bond of friendship relations and close cooperation between our two countries and the governments will be further strengthened and developed in the years to come for mutual benefits of our two countries and peoples as well as for the peace, friendship and cooperation in the region and the world.

On the Occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to express my best wishes to Your Excellency good health, personal well-being and greater success in your noble tasks in leading the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to further prosperity.

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

From H.E Mr. Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah
Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman
Your Excellency,

I extend cordial congratulations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

May also take this opportunity to reaffirm our desire to enhance the bilateral relation between our two friendly countries in the spirit of constructive and fruitful cooperation. I wish you, Your Excellency, all good health and very success, and to the friendly people of your country peace and prosperity.

Yours sincerely,

From Dr. Thongloun Sisoulith
Prime Minister of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic
Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and on my own behalf, I have the great pleasure to convey my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and through you to the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am strongly confident that the existing long-standing traditional bond of friendship relations and close cooperation between our two countries and the governments will be further strengthened and developed in the years to come for mutual benefits of our two countries and peoples as well as for the peace, friendship and cooperation in the region and the world.

On the Occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to express my best wishes to Your Excellency good health, personal well-being and greater success in your noble tasks in leading the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to further prosperity.

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

From H.E Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic
Your Excellency,

I have the great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to Your Excellency and through Your Excellency to the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the 70th Anniversary of Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I strongly believe that our close collaboration as well as the friendly ties and cooperation between our two countries will be further strengthened in the years to come for mutual benefits of our two countries and the ASEAN family.

On the Occasion of the New Year 2018, I would like to extend my best wishes for Your Excellency’s good health, happiness and greater success in your noble tasks.

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

From Mr. Abdelkader Messahel
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria
Excellency,

It gives me a great pleasure, while the Republic of Union of Myanmar is celebrating its National Day, to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes of good health and peace to Your Excellency, as well as continuous progress and prosperity to the people of Myanmar.

I would also like to seize this opportunity to reiterate my willingness to work with you to enhance the relations of cooperation existing between our two countries for the mutual benefit of our two peoples.

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

From H.E Mr. Pham Binh Minh
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

May also take this opportunity to reaffirm our desire to enhance the bilateral relation between our two friendly countries in the spirit of constructive and fruitful cooperation. I wish you, Your Excellency, all good health and very success, and to the friendly people of your country peace and prosperity.

Yours sincerely,

From Mr. Ivan Korcok
Deputy Minister and Acting Minister of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic
Your Excellency,

I’d like to express my conviction that the friendly relations between our countries will deepen and strengthen also through contribution of cooperation between both our ministries of foreign affairs.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.
Outstanding students from Myanmar placed in top-9 of Go Green in City 2017 competition

By Nandar Win & Win Win Maw

Outstanding students from Myanmar made their country proud by being placed in the top-9 of the Go Green in the City 2017 international competition. Maung Phyo Thu Htet, a fourth-year Information Science Technology student, and Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung, a third-year Computer Engineering student, entered the contest and stood in the top-9.

The following is an interview with the outstanding students who placed in top-9 of the international competition.

Q: Could you explain about the Go Green in the City 2017 international competition?

Maung Phyo Thu Htet: The competition was organised by Schneider Electric Co., Ltd, which is based in France. Many people took an interest in this competition via Facebook and other social media. Those who were interested in this project, applied for it online. There were more than 800 competitors from 136 countries this time.

Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung: There was a talk show on Go Green in the City 2017 competition in our school, and the head of the department told us about it and urged me to enter the competition. Accordingly, I made a project presentation. Luckily, I was selected in the top-5 of the competition.

Q: How was the competition?

Maung Phyo Thu Htet: This competition aims to present a fantastic idea about how to make our society green. We entered the green project and had to participate in many projects at different levels, along with the registration process, such as Team Mate, Challenge and Idea Submission. I had to compete to represent Myanmar, and was chosen in the top-5 and listed at the world champion level. As a result, I had to compete in the semi-final again. Fortunately, I was selected to represent Myanmar, and our team stood in the top-9 at Japan’s level.

Q: Could you tell us more about your preparations?

Maung Phyo Thu Htet: Myanmar has been entering this competition for three years. As for me, I was selected in the final list and came to Yangon. I had to learn how to make a good presentation, besides developing my English proficiency skills. I had to go in for the title ‘Energy Saving’, together with the environmental conservation project. It is of vital importance to have your own innovative and creative ideas, from reading, thinking, travelling and surfing the internet.

In the first phase, I entered many stages, such as Challenge and Idea Submission. I also participated in the group discussions that were held in the Yangon office. As for making preparations for the projects, we switched on the lights, and then we wrote “Switch off the light after using it.” It looked like an energy-saving campaign with the use of sensors. I first thought of “Cool Green” to give the feel of a shady place, when the word “Creepers” occurred to me. Therefore, I had to go to many places, such as farms and gardens in Pyin Oo Lwin, where I could combine “technology and innovation.”

Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung: Contestants had participated from 155 different countries, and we had to think of “creative ideas, as well as innovations.” We had to hone our presentation skills, spoken English skills and listening skills to enter the competition.

Q: What was your project in the competition?

Maung Phyo Thu Htet: My project was ‘Growing Creepers’, which is not an easy task to do. I built a steel structure design with a shady place and a 20-foot-wide plot of land to grow the creepers. Further, I added a water-pot stand around it, in the traditional Myanmar style. My project aimed to raise the environmental awareness of the local people who throw litter and rubbish in public areas, such as recreation centres and rivers.

I added two kinds of robot birds. One robot bird was placed near a tree branch; another one was placed near the water-pot stand. I got this idea from a Myanmar folk tale, “Kyee Nyi Naung,” which means “A Tale of Two Bird Brothers.”

This project will be carried out as part of the Pyin Oo Lwin Yadanar Myo Thit project. My project is the only one of its kind in Myanmar, as well as in the world, and I am trying my best to show it within a year. I am sure that my project can help my country.

Q: Could you tell us about your experience during the competition?

Maung Phyo Thu Htet: This is my own creation and innovation, which can help save energy and cool its system. I tried very hard for it, and my experience was strange, because I had to vie with a virtual contestant in the semi-final competition.

Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung: I got this idea from a friend of mine and had to practice a lot. I had to collect data on creepers. I overcame all obstacles by using the effective Teaching Method Project of the USAID Organisation.

Q: Could you explain more about the nature of virtual competitions?

Maung Phyo Thu Htet: At the semi-final stage, there were 12 teams from various regions, such as Africa, America and other European countries. Therefore, I presented my project using the internet. There were sound recordings, films being shot, and question and answer sessions at the competition. As for me, I had to present my own project on behalf of my country.

Q: What benefits did you gain from this competition?

Maung Phyo Thu Htet: I believe that both my idea and creation can be transformed into a project, which can be beneficial to the country. Even though my idea is small, I had a good chance to present my creation to those from other countries in the world. Moreover, I could show off my talent and skills, which were useful and effective in the process of environmental conservation, through this competition. I had a great chance to represent our university and country.

Ma Win Nadi Aik Maung: This is my first experience and am very pleased to have taken part in this competition. My aim in life is to serve my country.

Q: And what are your ambitions?

A: I assume that I have to realise my ambitions. I shall try to create what I would like to be in my mind. I will make the best use of all my efforts to serve my country and society to the best of my abilities.

Thanks a lot for your answers, and may all your dreams come true as early as possible.
70th Independence Day celebrated nationwide

A team of men grab the winning flag atop a greasy bamboo pole as they participate in the popular folk game held on Independence Day in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. PHOTO: NAY WIN TUN

A team of women are urged on during their participations in a tug-of-war competition yesterday as part of the celebration of the 70th Independence Day in Kyunpyaw, Ayeyawady Region. PHOTO: NAY WIN MYINT/IPRD

Children play football on Ingapu Street in Sanchaung yesterday to mark Independence Day in Yangon. PHOTO: MARK ANGELES

Schoolchildren take part in a sack race at a regional ceremony held to mark the 70th anniversary of Independence Day in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: IPRD

Two school children participate in the pillow fight game yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw to mark Independence Day. PHOTO: IPRD

Children participate in a race on the 70th anniversary of Independence Day in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Women take part in a race requiring them to balance a bowl on their heads in Maungtaw. PHOTO: NAY WIN TUN
Murray pulls out of Australian Open with hip injury

CANBERRA — Former world number one Andy Murray has pulled out of the Australian Open after failing to recover from a hip injury, tournament organisers said on Thursday.

The three-time grand slam winner has not played a competitive match since Wimbledon last July and despite coming through a one-set exhibition in Abu Dhabi last week, the Briton has decided to focus on rehabilitation.

“Sadly I won’t be playing in Melbourne this year, as I am not yet ready to compete,” Murray, a five-times Australian Open winner, said in a statement.

“I’ll be flying home shortly to assess all the options but I appreciate all the messages of support and I hope to be back playing soon.”

Australian Open tournament director Craig Tiley said: “We are fully aware that Andy has been going through a difficult period with his hip and that he’s done everything possible to prepare for the Australian summer.

“Personally, I also know that Andy loves tennis and would do anything to play. This is a very hard decision for Andy and we totally respect it.”

Murray has slipped to 16th in the world rankings since being beaten by American Sam Querrey in the Wimbledon quarter-finals.

The 30-year-old Briton attempted a comeback at the US Open in August but was forced to withdraw two days before the start of the tournament.

Another former world number one, Novak Djokovic, faces a race against time to recover from an elbow injury after pulling out of the Qatar Open.

“Tiley confirmed both Djokovic and current world number one Rafa Nadal, who is recovering from a knee injury, will be ready for the first grand slam of the year starting on 15 January.

“I spoke to Novak. He’s already got every hour of the day planned between when he arrives and the start of the Australian Open. He’ll be ready,” Tiley said.

“(Rafa’s) on his way down here now so he’ll be ready. It’s not dissimilar from last year... Last year we were talking about the health of Rafa Nadal, Roger Federer and Serena Williams and two weeks later they were playing each other in the final.”

Kyaw Zin Lin

THE introduction ceremony for Sagaing United, a new football team of the Myanmar National League (MNL), will be held at the team’s home stadium on 11 January.

After the ceremony, Sagaing United will play their first Myanmar National League 2018 match against Rakhine United.

Sagaing FC will use Myawady football stadium, the stadium also used by ZeyaShweMyay FC, as their home stadium.

The Sagaing FC, formerly known as Mahar United FC, secured second place in Myanmar National League MNL-2 and has stepped up to MNL-1.

The new team will be representing the Sagaing Region.

Many entertainment programmes will be included in the introduction ceremony, according to the MNL.