President U Win Myint receives Indian Minister of External Affairs

President U Win Myint received a delegation led by Indian Minister of External Affairs Ms. Sushma Swaraj at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. During the meeting, they cordially discussed bilateral relations between the two countries, Rakhine State development and the peace process, cooperation in the investment and trade sectors, as well as upgrading the socio-economic life of people along the border. The meeting was also attended by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and other officials. Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Vikram Misri was also in attendance, together with the delegation led by the Indian Minister of External Affairs.—Myanmar News Agency  

JMC-U holds 16th meeting at NRPC in Yangon

By Zaw Gyi

THE Union-level Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U) held its 16th meeting at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) in Yangon yesterday morning, where the outbreak of conflict between Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) signatories was discussed, among other issues.

The meeting was attended by JMC-U Chairman Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and Tatmadaw representatives Lt-Gen Aye Win, Lt-Gen Than Tun Oo and Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe, JMC-U Vice Chairman (1) Saw Isaac Po and heads of ethnic armed organizations, JMC-U Vice Chairman (2) U Pyae Sone and civilian representatives and members of the technical assistance office.

In his message of greetings to the meeting, JMC-U Chairman Lt-Gen Yar Pyae said there are pre-selected programmes for the meeting, as well as continued open discussions on policies that were the result of yesterday’s general meeting.

The chairman primarily urged open discussions on future works in implementing JMC works and
Ministry of Health and Sports discusses WHO funds

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe led a meeting on 9 May to discuss better management of the World Health Organisation (WHO) funds for the public, along with officials from WHO Myanmar, directors-general, deputy directors-general, project managers and officials from different departments.

The meeting also discussed ways to receive increased funds, in line with set rules and regulations. WHO supports health funds to Myanmar biennially, with the two most recent rounds of funding being once in the fiscal year 2016-2017 and once in the fiscal year 2018-2019. To be eligible for these increased funds, Myanmar also has to contribute US$40,000 to WHO funds annually.

At the meeting, the union minister requested the professionals working at WHO Myanmar to work harder in providing health assistance to Myanmar. He added that he would also discuss this with the director-general from the WHO headquarters and Director of WHO Southeast Asia Regional office. The union minister said the focal person from WHO’s financial department and their project managers will be in constant contact to review the rules and regulations set by the head of WHO’s financial department, which usually changes with a change in leadership.

The current rules and regulations set by WHO allow funds to be allotted in separate transactions, as opposed to delivering the entire amount of funding in one go. The first transaction is calculated on the country’s current project cost estimates. Once the first half of funding is spent or the project is completed on time, WHO sends the second half of the total funds. The union minister urged the departmental project managers to provide the best service possible to the public, while finding ways to complete their projects on time or before the deadline, if possible. The union minister said if they are unable to utilise the allotted funds from WHO on time, the remaining funds will either be sent to other countries or reclaimed by WHO, adding that requesting for increased funding in the future might then be more difficult.

The union minister asked WHO Myanmar officials and the departmental project managers to collaborate on acquiring private donations given by WHO on behalf of private donors. The union minister concluded his speech by requesting all the officials concerned to increase their performance in their relevant fields.

Next, WHO Myanmar Public Health Administrator Dr Muhammad Shahjahan and National Professional Officer Dr Myo Paing explained the current WHO financial rules and regulations, the available opportunities for increased funding, and further collaboration between WHO officials and departmental project managers. This was followed by an open discussion with the attendees.—Myanmar News Agency

Pyithu Hluttaw speaker receives Nepali Ambassador

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received the Nepali Ambassador Mr. Bhim K. Udas at the Pyithu Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed the promotion of bilateral relations between the parliaments of the two countries, cooperation in the investment, trade and travel sectors, and establishment of the Nepal-Myanmar Friendship Association.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Aung, alias U Tun Tun Hein, and officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw office also attended the meeting. —Myanmar News Agency

Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun receives WHO mission

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun received the World Health Organisation (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Need Assessment Mission at the guest hall of the Ministry of Information yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed increasing the momentum of implementing the reduction in consumption of cigarettes and tobacco products under the FCTC’s 2030: Strategy—Myanmar, programmes that the Ministry of Information can conduct to inform the public of the adverse effects of cigarettes and tobacco products on the society, economy and health, and establishing good practices and habits.—Myanmar News Agency
We face various kinds of internal and external challenges while we endeavor for political, economic and social development of our country. As we are aware of the importance of our international responsibility, we have adopted a path consistent with the needs and situation of our country respecting at the same time the views and opinions of the international community.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1st April 2018)

Our country is still in poverty with necessities in every sector; which is why we need to carry on our struggle and work hard in all sectors. In the international arena, we are facing pressure, criticisms and misunderstandings. The challenges and difficulties our country and our people are facing today are many. Although every issue cannot be solved easily, we will have to make utmost efforts to solve these issues according to each priority sector.

(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)
Mandalay Region may get over 500,000 tourists this fiscal year

The Mandalay Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism is expecting more than 500,000 tourists to visit the Mandalay Region this fiscal year, according to a report in Mawady Daily yesterday.

According to the record, more than 200,000 tourists visited the Mandalay Region from January through the first week of May 2018. Most tourists were from China, as well as France, Thailand, Germany, the United States, Italy, Japan and South Korea.

The Mandalay Region welcomed more than 500,000 tourists in 2017. Therefore, the department is expecting more than 500,000 tourists to visit Mandalay this year.

The Mandalay Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism is establishing new destinations and supervising systematically the sustainable development of the environment conservation programme.

Top tourist attractions in the city include the Mandalay Hill, Mya Nan San Kyaw Golden Palace, Maha Muni Buddha Image and U Bein Bridge.—GNLM

YCDC to cooperate with IFC to improve construction permit system

THE Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) will cooperate with International Finance Corporation (IFC) to update procedures on issuing construction permits in the Yangon Region, according to a report in Mawady Daily yesterday.

With its vast experience in reforming the construction permit systems globally, the IFC is well-positioned to help Yangon draw property investors by establishing a streamlined process. The reform will reduce administrative bottlenecks and increase Myanmar’s management capacity, thus promoting sustainable private sector development and creating jobs.

“Ancient, transparent and affordable permit system can lead to a healthy, competitive and sustainable construction sector,” said Vikram Kumar, IFC country manager for Myanmar.

In the Doing Business 2018 report, Myanmar is ranked 70 for issuing construction permits. Myanmar’s construction permit system can lead to a healthy, competitive and sustainable construction sector,” said Vikram Kumar, IFC country manager for Myanmar.

THE Yangon Region Transport Authority will no longer allow the use of light trucks to ferry students to school in the coming fiscal year, according to a report in Mawady Daily yesterday.

YRTA and officials of basic education schools recently agreed to upgrade academic year. They also agreed to upgrade the new system from the next academic year.

“The school bus system will be launched in the coming academic year and will be mainly applicable for schools in downtown areas. We will not allow the use of light trucks to ferry school students,” said a YRTA official.

Only left-hand drive micro buses, mini buses and buses with a seating capacity of 10 persons and above will be allowed to be used as a ferry service. Private cars can transport the school students, but they will not be permitted to park near schools.

Schools buses must be in accordance with World Bank study, accounts for some five per cent of the workforce and has the highest earning potential, compared to other sectors.

Apart from creating jobs, the sector supports the development of vital infrastructure projects and other industries, such as manufacturing and tourism.—GNLM

Light trucks banned from ferrying students to school

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Schools buses must be installed with a GPS and CCTV cameras for the safety of children. The school buses will be launched in 22 basic education schools located in the most crowded areas of the town.

The Yangon Region government bought some 200 units of Hyundai cars under the government-to-government system from Posco Daewoo Corporation.—GNLM
Local, foreign businessmen invited to invest in new urban development projects of Yangon Region

By May Thet Hnin

LOCAL and foreign businessmen are invited to invest in the new urban development projects of the Yangon zone master plan, said U Than, who is the joint secretary of Yangon City Development Committee and a member of Yangon Region Investment Committee.

U Than was speaking during the Yangon Investment Forum held on 9 May.

Sub-centres, new towns, railway stations and industrial zones will be established as part of the new urban development plan.

The sub-centre projects are planned for Mindana Secondary central business district (CBD), Yankin Sub-centre, Thilawa SEZ Sub-centre, Dagon Myothit Sub-centre and Dagon Seikkan Sub-centre. The trade centre, convention centre, social service centre, R&D logistics, information technology and software centre, commercial, business and tourism centres, a sports complex, an amusement park and an inland port will be established in the central business districts.

The new town projects are planned for Thilawa New City, Southwest New City (west side of Kyimyindine), Dagon East New City and Dala New City.

Next, the railway station area development projects will be carried out near and around Yangon Central Railway Station, Kyimyindine railway station, Insein railway station, Yegu railway station, and Mingaladon railway station and Danyingone railway station, as well as the Emblem station of the nation, Gateway of CBD, commercial and business functionality accumulated station, transit node station from surrounding areas and the intercity terminal station projects.

Businessmen can invest in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone and new industrial zones, besides the existing industrial zones.

The Yangon urban development master plan will prioritise 45 projects at an estimated cost of US$2.6 billion. Among the priority projects are nine urban development projects, 10 central business district renovation projects and nine social service and management projects. Some $885 million have been allocated to implement the 23 projects for the urban development management sector. The remaining 17 projects are in the infrastructure development sector, at an estimated spending of $1.802 billion. “The Yangon development vision is to make it an international hub city, a well-managed infrastructure city, a comfortable city and a city of good-governance,” said U Than.

“The urban structure includes decentralisation, which means the urban centre function will be dispersed to the outer areas. The Yangon Region will design a national road network and also, it is planned to extend this project to the southern sea-port,” he maintained.

Additionally, businessmen can invest in the proposed projects, such as the smart and eco city project in northeast of Yangon, the Dagon East modernised industrial zone in Dagon Myothit (east and south), the low cost and affordable housing project in Twantay Township, the Yangon South West New City project in Twantay and Kyimyindine townships, government employees’ housing projects in Dagon Seikkan Township, Sagyiwa transport hub projects in Mingaladon Township, and Dry port and ICD projects in Ngwepinle and Hilmyathaya townships.

Some 11 new industrial zones will be established outside Yangon city. “We conducted a feasibility study of the land use plan. We will avoid favouritism by not divulging information and prevent monopoly. We disclosed information to the public as they have a right to know and express freely their feelings concerning the projects. This being so, we will reveal to them in advance,” said the Yangon Region chief minister.

The Yangon Region is the commercial hub city attracting local and foreign investments. It helps support 23 per cent of the GDP of the country.

Border trade at Muse gate up by $17 million in April

MYANMAR’s trade value with China via the Muse border camp was US$273 million between 1 and 27 April during the transition period of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, according to figures released by the commerce ministry.

Among Myanmar’s border checkpoints, Muse gate witnessed the largest trade with China. Trade value through Muse, as of 27 April, increased by $17 million compared to the same period last FY.

Besides Muse gate, Myanmar carries out border trade with China via Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Kapiketee and Kengtung checkpoints.

The Sino-Myanmar trade value through the five border gates this FY reached $311 million, which is an increase of $30 million compared to last FY.

The trade values registered at various gates were $21 million at Lwejel, $16 million at Chinshwehaw, $33.7 million at Kapiketee and $0.294 million at Kengtung.

Rice, various types of peas, sesame seeds, corn, vegetables and fruits, dried tea leaves, fishery products, rubber, minerals and animal products are exported to China, whereas machinery, plastic raw materials, consumer products and electronic tools flow into Myanmar.— Ko Htet

Thai-Myanmar border trade value exceeds $110 mln last month

TRADE at the Thai-Myanmar border gates was worth some US$111 million from 1 to 27 April of the six-month transition period for the 2018-2019 FY, which increased by some $40 million compared to last FY.

Border trade values were worth $4.47 million at the Tachilek gate, $54 million at Myawady, $20.59 million at Kawthoung, $30.89 million at Myek, $6.48 million at Hteekhee, $0.63 million at Mawtaung and $0.06 million at Maese.

Industrial machinery, trucks, agricultural equipment, tractors, motorcycles, cars, food and beverages, cosmetics, fuel oil, fertilisers, cement, construction materials and sugar for re-export are imported through the Myawady gate.

Fish, prawns, crabs, onions, sesame, turmeric, herbs and for re-export are imported through the Myawady gate.

Fish, prawns, crabs, onions, sesame, turmeric, herbs and forestry products are sent to Thailand.—Htet Myat
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives Swiss Ambassador

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, received Swiss Ambassador Mr. Paul R. Seger at the Bayint Naung Guesthouse in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to Swiss assistance and participation in the Myanmar peace process and the situation in Rakhine State. — Myanmar News Agency

Chinese Public Security Minister visits Shwedagon Pagoda

A DELEGATION led by Mr. Zhao Kezhi, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Minister of Public Security, who was in Yangon, visited Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday morning.

Next, the Chinese minister arrived in Latha Township Police Station and was welcomed by senior police personnel from the Yangon Region Police Force. The visitors were briefed about the status of the police works conducted through a PowerPoint presentation by Police Brig-Gen Win Naing.

Later, the Chinese Minister of Public Security donated two laptops to the police station, inspected the layout of the police station, the detention centre at the police station and the patrol car donated by the People’s Republic of China.

Indian Minister of External Affairs visits Shwedagon Pagoda

Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Indian Minister of External Affairs, arrived in Nay Pyi Taw at 2 p.m. yesterday and was welcomed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary U Myint Thu and Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Vikram Misri at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport.

Later in the evening, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin hosted a dinner for the Indian minister and her delegation at Shwe San Eain Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

The dinner was also attended by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Industry U Khin Maung Cho, Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw and other officials. — MNA

Wholesale, retail foreign companies permitted to operate in Myanmar

THE Ministry of Commerce will permit wholesale and retail foreign companies and joint Myanmar-foreign ventures to operate in the country.

The government has issued notice 25/2018 dated 9 May regarding the same. The aim is to promote fair competition, give more choices to the consumer, reduce prices, raise the quality of goods and services distributed, assist local products acquire market share and develop small and medium enterprises.

Companies — foreign, local or joint Myanmar-foreign ventures — that conduct wholesale and retail sales must follow the rules and regulations attached to the notice. The amendments to the rules and regulations will be made and announced occasionally. —Myanmar News Agency

Police apprehend 10 illegal migrants in Ayeyawady Region

ACTING on a tip, the police apprehended two illegal migrants near a creek, six miles east of KoneGyi Village in Hinthada District, Ayeyawady Region, on 9 May. The two men were Ayun Ali alias Hla Kyaw from OhntawGyi camp for displaced persons in Sittway Township, and Abdula alias Maung Kyaw from Theikkyan Village in Sittway Township.

After interrogating the two men, the police found that eight other illegal migrants had also entered the area. Yesterday, the police apprehended Zawki Ahmed alias Kyaw Naing, Jaung Bo alias Maung Hla, Mahmud Jabel alias Hla Kyaw, Zanura Baegum alias Khin Khin Nu, Bi Bi Asha alias Hla Hla Sein, Kaw Reema Baegum alias Hla Hla Myint, Ara Baegum alias Than Than Nu, and Shaw Bi Khia Baegum alias Ma Ma Aye near KoneGyi Village. The police are conducting further investigations in the case. —Kyaw Kyaw (District IPRD)

Apology

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation would like to apologise for an error in an article on Page 2 in the 10 May 2018 edition of the Global New Light of Myanmar. in the article titled “Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation receives chairman of China Huaneng Group Co., Ltd”; instead of China Huaneng Group Co., Ltd the correct name should be Huaneng Lancang River Hydropower Inc. —Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
YANGON is a very important region because it is the economic hub of Myanmar. Projects implemented and policies laid down in Yangon have a major role in influencing other parts of the country with good prospects.

Economic development in this region will surely bring about development of other regions and states. With a great tradition, Yangon lies on sea, land and air routes. Regarding the tourism industry, Yangon needs to preserve its cultural heritage and create novel attractions which have no adverse impact on the environment. Yangon is a place for human resource development and it is a strategic point for national security. The city is being expanded, and its economy is also being expanded.

There has been a great migration from all parts of the country to Yangon to find good jobs.

Therefore, Yangon welcomes the garment industry, which needs a large labour force, to enter the country. Myanmar’s sea outlets and cheap labour is offered to investors who want to implement industrial zones in Yangon.

Yangon possesses prospects for a booming economy with local and foreign investment. But we need more responsible foreign investment for Yangon to become a vitally important city.

Plans are under way to turn Yangon into a clean city governed by the rule of law and an economically vibrant city, giving priority to a green economy in the city.

All in all, Yangon possesses prospects for a booming economy with local and foreign investment. But we need more responsible foreign investment for Yangon to become a vitally important city, not only for Myanmar but also for other ASEAN countries.

We need effective environmental regulations, but also for businesses to abide by regulations and do their business responsibly on a daily basis, to limit the pollution in Yangon.

Yangon is expected to see development not only in major businesses but also small and medium enterprises due to the great interest of big international companies as well as SME entrepreneurs around the country.

At this juncture, the government’s support for local entrepreneurs is of great importance to be able to compete with foreign firms in every business sector. Only when the country doubles its efforts can it be able to compete with ASEAN countries and keep abreast with the international community.

Care and maintenance of the toddy palm tree

Toddy Juice

Toddy is harvested from 15-year-old toddy palms. Toddy climbers use clamps to prepare the leaves to be cut and chop a little of its tip to allow the sap to flow. Male toddy climbers cut down the male toddy palm’s stalk that bear young fruits and make a small slice in each fruit for sap collection. Small pots are strategically hung below the incision on the stalk to catch the dripping sap. Toddy juice is sweet when first harvested from the tree, but it may be fermented in the sun to make an alcoholic drink, called "toddy beer" or "toddy wine."

Jaggery

Jaggery or toddy palm candy is a popular product of toddy sap. After the sap is collected, it is poured into a large pan then boiled over an open wood fire. When the juce thickens, it is cooled, becoming more solid, and rolled by hand into round, edible pieces. The resulting candy has a sweet taste but is traditionally served with green tea. Jaggery is an essential ingredient in recipes for Myanmar snacks and it can be used to make alcohol through distillation. The toddy business has huge potential and it’s time for Yangon to become a vitally important city for Myanmar palm tree.
Ground consecration ceremony held for building Eternal Peace Pagoda

A GROUND consecration ceremony to build a pagoda dedicated to eternal peace in Myanmar was held in the compound of Yanaungmyin Shwe Latt Hla Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the ceremony, the congregation led by Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council Dr Myo Aung received the Nine Precepts from the State Ovadacariya Sayadaw Abhidjana Maharathaguru Bhaddanta Kavisara and presented the religious objects for the ceremony to the Members of the Sangha.

At the site where the pagoda would be built, Members of the Sangha recited the parittas and holy verses of the Buddha while the congregation held religious objects.

Afterwards, the laypersons buried the pots filled with the religious objects in the compound of the site chosen for the pagoda.

The Eternal Peace Pagoda will be built on the 1.3 acres of land and it will be 54 ft high when completed.

A meeting regarding the building of the pagoda was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture on 8 May.

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko and members of the leading committee, working committees and sub-working committees took part in the meeting.

Under the aegis of Shweparami Tawya Sayadaw Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhamma Kahtika Bahujana Hitadhara Ashin Sanddardihika, the pagoda will be built with the donation of Chairman of Tatlan Developer Company U Shein Win, laypersons and wellwishers.—Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar-Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrols

Following coordination between the two countries, the Myanmar Border Police and Bangladesh Border Police forces conducted coordinated patrols along the respective sides of the border.

The security forces conducted coordinated patrols from border posts 31 to 32 on 2 May, from border posts 32 to 34 and from border posts 42 to 43 on 6 May, from border posts 34 to 35 on 8 May and from border posts 43 to 44 on 9 May. Coordinated patrols along the land border were conducted 14 times in February and seven times in March and will be continued. The two forces have also planned coordinated patrols along the Naf River for four times.—Myanmar News Agency

JMC-U holds 16th meeting at NRPC in Yangon

Chairman was urging to build trust in every JMC meeting.

However, levels of trust differ between regions and all need to take special care in doing things in regions where the level of trust is low. Ample time should be taken to conduct coordination well in advance. Some small acts can destroy existing trust, pushing all back towards an armed conflict situation.

This is based upon current events. All must be careful not to conduct any acts that would create obstacles on the path to peaceful resolution. Don’t do anything that destroy trust and do things that strengthen the ceasefire.

Both armed organizations are defending and protecting the people according to their own beliefs and both need to conduct discussions as soon as possible for displaced persons to settle back in their places of origin and prevent any recurrence of incidences between the armed organizations.

All were urged to resolve conflicts without using force, said the Vice Chairman (1).

The meeting started after the welcoming speech by JMC-U Vice Chairman (2) U Pyae Sone. Implementation of decisions made in the 15th meeting, discussions made at the secretariat meeting, the summary of the JMC second general meeting, the discussion on ceasefire implementation between 15th and 16th meeting and general discussions were made at the meeting.

JMC-U 16th meeting that started yesterday will continue for two more days. The Secretariat meeting of all levels of JMC was held on 8 May and the JMC second general meeting was held on 8 and 9 May in Yangon, it is learnt.

Rainfall to increase in Taninthayi Region, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states

THERE is a likelihood of an increase in rainfall in Taninthayi Region, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states in the next two days as the weather is cloudy over the Andaman Sea and the Southwest Bay, and partly cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal, according to the Myanmar Daily Weather Report issued by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology yesterday.

The forecast for Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Yangon and neighboring areas for today is isolated rain or thundershowers and the degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar’s waters and the wave height will be some three-five feet off and along Myanmar’s coasts.

The weather forecast for the next 10 days of May 2018 as stated by the weather bureau forecasts that a low-pressure area may form over the South Bay of Bengal and it may further intensify into a depression. During this period, monsoon will be moderate. The weather will be partly cloudy over North Bay and partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.—GNLM

The meeting of JMC-U held in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: PE ZAW
Shan State officials attend workshop for improved municipal services

As the last embers of the Htein Bin rubbish dump fire in Hinthada Township, Yangon Region were being extinguished, Shan State’s Development Affairs Organisations (DAOs) agreed that improving waste management is a priority and shared examples of good practices within the state.

The Asia Foundation, a nonprofit international development organisation committed to improving lives across Asia, and the Renaissance Institute, a policy institute in Myanmar that focuses on assisting the economic reform of Myanmar, have been working with DAOs to improve urban service delivery and municipal revenues, and improve communication between government and the public.

A workshop on 8 and 9 May organised by The Asia Foundation and the Renaissance Institute brought together 150 municipal officers and Chief Engineers, from all 77 municipalities of Shan State to learn from each other and from international experience. The DAOs of Kalaw, Muse and Hsipaw made presentations on the challenges they face in waste management and the reforms they have taken to improve landfill management and reduce illegal garbage dumping.

DAOs are the equivalent of municipal authority outside of Yangon and Mandalay. They raise their own revenues through taxes, fees and licenses and deliver services (mainly garbage collection, roads and bridges, street lighting, sewers and drainage) to the citizens of their cities.

Tun Thet Aung, The Asia Foundation’s mapping analyst and garbage reform lead, presented the fundamentals of landfill management. This covered decisions on site selection and the critical need for effective landfill design, reducing organic content being collected, and covering the waste collected with soil on a daily basis to reduce methane gas emissions. All of these steps can reduce the risk of fire and address other environmental concerns, which State Director U Sai Tun Tun raised as a key challenge for municipal authorities in Shan State.

A consistent message from workshop participants was that in addition to improving their own waste collection services, municipalities needed to work better with residents to reduce illegal dumping and improve the cleanliness of cities. Better communication with residents on the consequences of illegal dumping was suggested as one way to combat bad habits and trigger new practices of recycling and proper disposal of waste.

In a workshop exercise, participants explored different ways of communicating, and defined housewives (who are generally responsible for disposing of garbage) and children as the most appropriate target groups when building an outreach campaign. Ideas for campaign communication activities included education workshops in schools and community events.

A key objective of the workshop was to “exchange and learn from each other”, a point emphasized by Shan Development Affairs Minister U Sai Son Hsai. Group discussions and scenario exercises on topics such as municipal revenues, mapping garbage routes and property taxation.

Municipal officials of the Shan State government attend a two-day workshop in Taunggyi on 8 and 9 May to discuss and share best practices for delivery of services such as garbage collection, roads and bridges, street lighting, sewers and drainage to the citizens of their cities.

Shan State to learn from each other, a point emphasized by Shan Development Affairs Minister U Sai Son Hsai. Group discussions and scenario exercises on topics such as municipal revenues, mapping garbage routes and property tax creation space for the participants to exchange experiences on areas for reform and improvement.

The workshop was funded through the support of the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). —GNLM
DHAKA — Dozens of Bangladeshis were killed in lightning strikes as pre-monsoon thunderstorms wreaked havoc across the South Asian country, an official said Thursday.

Farmers harvesting rice in open fields made up the majority of victims, Iftekharul Islam, a director at Bangladesh’s disaster management department, told AFP. “In the last 24 hours, 29 people have died from lightning in 12 districts. Almost all of them are farmers,” he said.

Scores of people die every year after being struck by lightning during Bangladesh’s wet season, which runs from April to October, but officials say the numbers are exceptionally high this year. Islam said that more than 112 people had been killed in strikes in the first 10 days of May.

“Every day 10-12 people are dying from lightning,” he explained, adding that it was instilling fear in farmers who harvest rice during this time of the year.

Authorities declared lightning a natural disaster after 82 people were killed in a single day in May 2018. Independent monitors estimated that some 349 Bangladeshis died from lightning that year. Experts say deaths are rising as Bangladesh, one of the world’s poorest nations, witnesses the increased deforestation of rural areas. Farmers are known to chop down trees to free up space to grow more rice. Disaster management officials are trying to reduce the high death toll by planting five million palm trees to provide better shelter.

“We have already planted 3.8 million palm trees. But the trees take years to grow tall,” said Islam.

Bangladeshi officials say a similar tree-planting programme in Thailand has yielded results.

—AFP

### Invitation for Price Quotations

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Electric Power Project (EPP). The IDA No. of the financing agreement is No. 5306 MM. The Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy in its role as implementing agency of the EPP, intends to apply the portion of the proceeds of this credit towards eligible payments under the contracts for which this invitation for Quotation is issued.

MOEE now invites eligible suppliers to express the interest in supplying the following items.

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<td>b. 66kV Current Transformer</td>
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<td>Sets</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>G-06</td>
<td>a. The Universal Relay Test Set and Commissioning Tool</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sets</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>b. Double Stage Vacuum Transformer Oil purifier</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sets</td>
</tr>
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<td>c. Turbine Oil purifier</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sets</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>G-07</td>
<td>a. 125V Battery Bank (300Ah) &amp; Battery Charger Complete with DC Distribution Board</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sets</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. 230V Battery Bank (300Ah) &amp; Battery Charger Complete with DC Distribution Board</td>
<td>10</td>
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Eligible Suppliers having expressed interest will receive a Request for Quotation by E-mail, sealed Quotations will be submitted to the address below at the latest at the dead line (Friday, 8th June 2018, at 2 P.M. Myanmar time), after which no Quotations will be accepted.

Suppliers will be selected following the shopping Method as per the “Guide for procurement of Goods, works and non-consulting services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by world Bank Borrowers dated January 2011 (revised July 2014).

Please submit sealed Quotation to: U Khin Maung Win, Managing Director, Electric Power Generation Enterprise Office No. (27), Nay Pyi Taw, for detailed information please contact to U Han Zaw, Chief Engineer, Gas Turbine section, mobile phone +959426610206 and U Aung San Win, General Manager, Procurement section, mobile phone +959457733044 or Office phone +95678104319, E-mail: procurementepge.wb@gmail.com . Please indicate your E-mail address as only electronic copies of the RFQ will be send.

### Iraq readies for first election since end of IS war

BAGHDAD — Iraq is gearing up for key parliamentary elections on Saturday, some five months after declaring victory over the Islamic State group, with the dominant Shiites split, the Kurds in disarray and Sunnis sidelined.

A lull in violence ahead of the fourth such nationwide vote since Saddam Hussein was toppled in 2003 has spurred some hope for Iraqis, but surging tensions between key players Iran and the United States could rattle the country. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi—who has balanced off Washington and Tehran — is angling for a new term as he takes credit for the brutal fightback against the jihadists and seeing off a Kurdish push for independence.

But stiff competition from within his Shiite community, the majority group that dominates Iraqi politics, should fragment the vote and spell lengthy horse-trading to form any government. Whoever emerges as premier will face the mammoth task of rebuilding a country left shattered by the battle against IS. Despite a rare period of calm, more than two and a half million people remain internally displaced and the jihadists still pose a major security threat. Over 15 blood-soaked years since the US-led invasion upended Iraqi politics there is also widespread disillusionment with the same old faces from an elite seen as mired in corruption and sectarianism.—AFP

Iraqi supporters of shiite leader Moqtada Sadr attend a campaign rally in the capital Baghdad on 4 May 2018. PHOTO: AFP
‘Now the hard part’: Malaysia awakens to new political dawn

KUALA LUMPUR—Hope for lasting change in Malaysia after the opposition’s historic election win may hinge on whether triumphant 92-year-old autocrat-turned-progressive Mahathir Mohamad has truly changed his ways and possesses the vigour and clout to heal national divisions.

The wily former authoritarian ruler, expected to become prime minister once again, proved the difference in finally enabling a rising opposition movement to break the United Malaysia National Organisation’s (UMNO) six-decade lock on power.

The Pakatan Harapan coalition’s victory is Malaysia’s first real government change since independence from Britain in 1957 and will fuel public aspirations for wholesale change including rights protections, press freedom, anti-corruption measures, changes to divisive race-based policies, and true democratic rule.

“The People’s Tsunami,” the Malay-language Sinar Harian newspaper screamed in a front-page headline.

But Malaysian politics is known for head-spinning reversals – not least of which was Mahathir’s own conversion to grandfathers’ opposition darling and the future remains unclear.

“Now the hard work begins,” influential political website Malaysiakini.com said in an editorial. “No one should be under the illusion that a new government would be able to reverse the rot that had taken root for decades.”

“For a country that is so divided, it would take time to heal the wounds and for Malaysians to re-build the trust for one another and for the many institutions that have failed them.”

Racial tensions

Multicultural Malaysia has been increasingly riven by political and racial tension under now-outed leader Najib Razak, exacerbated by a multi-billion-dollar corruption scandal.

Najib is accused of presiding over the looting of sovereign wealth fund 1MDB and has responded with strident denials – and increasing repression.

Much depends on Mahathir, whose 1981-2003 tenure as UMNO leader and premier is often credited with creating a modern Malaysia, but also tarnished by the jailing of opponents and entrenchment of the political dominance of Mus-lim Malays, the country’s majority group, over the sizable Chinese and Indian minorities.

Just a few years ago, then-retired Mahathir had chastised his former protege Najib for loosening the reins with political liberalisation moves, which Mahathir warned would lead to chaos.

Those reforms were later nullified as Najib tightened the screws over 1MDB.

Ever the opportunist, Mahathir now rails against the system he helped create and has promised reforms such as leadership term limits and scrapping an unpopular sales tax imposed by Najib.

Malaysiakini called the vote a reminder that politicians are elected to serve the people “and not lord over them.”

“I would be wise for the incoming government to remember this.” —AFP

Hong Kong’s ‘Superman’ Li Ka-shing bows out

HONG KONG—Hong Kong’s richest man Li Ka-shing on Thursday brought down the curtain on a storied career, saying he had done “the best I can”.

The 89-year-old, known affectionately in the financial hub as Superman for his business acumen, stepped down as chairman of his flagship company CK Hutchison and handed the reins to his eldest son Victor after an upbeat annual general meeting.

A wartime refugee who came to Hong Kong from mainland China, Li got his start in 1950 making plastic flowerbuds and over the years built a sprawling conglomerate that has become part of the fabric of Hong Kong life, ranging from internet services to supermarket chains.

The tycoon greeted a large crowd of reporters with open arms and big smiles on Thursday, saying: “One person’s ability cannot bring about change. It requires everyone to work together and share a dream goal.”

Asked about his proudest achievement he said: “I’ve done the best I can.”

He told reporters: “I will miss you all… you have always been my friends.”

Li announced his retirement in mid-March when his companies released their full-year results, finally ending mounting speculation about his plans.

A sweeping revamp of his vast empire in 2015 was seen as a sign that he was paving the way for Victor to take over.

After leaving the firm Li said he plans to focus on his charity, the Li Ka Shing Foundation, to which he has already pledged one-third of his assets. The foundation funds education and health initiatives around the world.

Li has an estimated fortune of over $33.3 billion, according to Bloomberg and Forbes.

Local media followed the tycoon closely during the day, including setting up a livestream outside his mansion and running footage of his early morning exercise routine.

“I’ll keep working, just doing different things,” a smiling Li said to reporters huddled around his car as he set off for the day.

Li told local television network i-Cable over the phone before his last meetings with shareholders as chairman that he was confident about his son taking over, having worked with him for decades.

Analysts said while the retirement of one of Hong Kong’s most famous characters is significant, it would not impact the performance of his companies.—AFP

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. ( KHAD 0096/N/S )

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. ( KHAD 0096/N/S ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-5-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. ( 019N/S )

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. ( 019N/S ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-5-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP 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 CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185
Cannes—Spanish Oscar winner Penelope Cruz said Wednesday that putting a firewall between acting and her private life — even when working with husband Javier Bardem — had put a stop to the “torture” of her early years in the industry.

Presenting her new film “Everybody Knows” by Iranian Asghar Farhadi at Cannes, Cruz told reporters that she and Bardem made a point of not taking their personal life to the set, or their work home with them.

“When I was in my 20s, I thought the more I would torture myself and the more I would stay in character for months, the better the result would be,” Cruz said.

“We (she and Bardem) have very similar ways to work and maybe I did that experiment when I was younger because we both started very young.”

Cruz and Bardem, who many celebrity watchers say have claimed the place vacated by Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt in the star couple firmament, met on the set of the sexy 1992 Spanish dramatic “Jamón Jamón” when she was still a teen.

But it took working together on Woody Allen’s “Vicky Cristina Barcelona,” which premiered at Cannes in 2008, to light the romantic spark.

Cruz took home an Academy Award for her supporting role as a hot-tempered artist in the film. She and Bardem, who won the previous year for “No Country for Old Men,” are respectively the first Spanish man and woman to win an acting Oscar.

Penelope Cruz puts ‘torture’ of early work behind her

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Banned director wants to turn Africa’s image on its head

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**Eurovision 2018: what you need to know before watching**

LISBON—From geopolitical drama to its ardent gay fan base — and questions like why can Australia enter? — Eurovision has proven its staying power. Here are five facts about the Eurovision Song Contest which this year is being held in Portugal for the first time.

**Guinness record**

The contest was started in 1956 with the aim of uniting Europe after World War II under the original name of the “Eurovision Grand Prix”.

It has been held every year since then, making it the longest-running international TV music competition, according to Guinness World Records.

There are annual music competitions that pre-date the event, which adopted the title of the Eurovision Song Contest in 1968, but none of them are broadcast on television.

Often billed as the biggest non-sporting TV event in the world, organisers predict this week’s two semi-finals and the finale in Lisbon on Saturday will have a combined global audience of around 200 million viewers.

**Big Five... and Australia**

The five biggest contributors to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), which operates Eurovision, automatically qualify for the finale along with the host nation of the event, which changes every year. The so-called “Big Five” are Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Spain.

While Australia is on the other side of the world, the contest has since the 1980s been hugely popular in the country, especially among its large population of descendants from European countries, and in 2015 the EBU agreed to let it take part in the competition.

Australia’s participation was initially set to be a one-off event but it has taken part in every subsequent edition, finishing second in 2016 when Korean-born Australian singer Dami Im represented the country.

**Geopolitics**

Conceived during the Cold War, Eurovision has always been as much about geopolitical drama as it has been about music.

Last year Ukraine did not let Russia’s candidate, wheelchair-using singer Yuliya Samoilova, enter the country to take part in the competition due to a row between Kiev and Moscow over Russia’s annexation of Crimea.

The contest already fuelled tensions between the two countries the year before after Ukraine’s singer, Jamala, took the crown with “1944,” a song about Joseph Stalin’s mass deportation of Crimean Tartars during World War II.

Numerous diplomatic incidents have overshadowed the contest, from Austria’s boycott of the 1969 event because it was being held in dictator General Francisco Franco’s Spain, to the refusal by Armenia to take part in the 2012 edition in rival neighbour Azerbaijan.

On several occasions, to avoid political tensions, participants have been called on to change or modify their songs.

**Gay fans**

With its high kitsch content, Eurovision has long been popular with gay fans and rainbow flags representing gay rights are a common sight at the finales alongside those of participating nations.

Each year gay bars and nightclubs across Europe host viewing parties that screen the semi-finals and the final of the contest live. In the lead-up to Saturday’s finale, Lisbon’s oldest gay nightclub, Trumps, is holding nightly Eurovision themed parties, which have been packed with foreigners in town for the contest.—AFP

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**The Dude abides: ‘The Big Lebowski’ at 20**

NEW YORK— Twenty years ago, a bathrobe-wearing stoner and his two buddies entrenched themselves in the public consciousness with a strange little movie about bowling, White Russians and a ruined rug.

Ethan and Joel Coen’s idiosyncratic, hopelessly complex “The Big Lebowski” distilled the unfussy, slackerspirit of 1990s Los Angeles into a Raymond Chandleresque crime caper.

It received no Oscar recognition and pretty lukewarm reviews for a byzantine plot which the Coens themselves admitted never really mattered — but it has proven its staying power.

Today it is nothing less than a cultural phenomenon, with its own religion, Dudeism, boasting 450,000 “ordained priests.”

Bathrobe-clad fans gather at the annual Lebowski Fest, which comes to Los Angeles in two weeks, to celebrate Jeffrey “The Dude” Lebowski, played by Jeff Bridges when he could still get away with board shorts.

“I’m so proud of being part of this movie. It’s just a good movie, a really good movie,” the 68-year-old Oscar winner said at a recent screening in Hollywood, hosted by Turner Classic Movies.

“The Dude, a drama-averse, unemployed slacker with a penchant for vodka with Kahula and cream, provides the drama as he embarks on a quest to replace his beloved rug, destroyed in a twisted case of mistaken identity.

Along for the ride are John Goodman’s loose-cannon Vietnam vet Walter Sobchak and Steve Buscemi’s virtually mute sidekick Donny.

**Off-kilter thriller**

Despite eventually making Rolling Stone’s list of “10 Best Stoner Movies of All Time,” it was neither a critical nor commercial hit on its release.

David Denby, of New York magazine, called it an “off-kilter thriller with a sad-sack hero” while for Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times, the story was “disjointed, incoherent and even irritating.”—AFP

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**Diego Rivera painting sets record at auction**

NEW YORK—A Diego Rivera painting set a record Wednesday night for the highest price paid at auction for a Latin American artwork, fetching $9.76 million and taking the honor away from his partner Frida Kahlo. The colorful painting entitled “Los Rivales” (The Rivals) and sold by Christie’s depicts two men at a traditional Mexican celebration. Until now the record was held by a Kahlo work auctioned in 2016 for $8 million.

The 1939 painting is called “Dos desnudos en el bosque (La tier- ranisma),” which translates as “Two Nudes in the Forest (The Earth Itself).”

A Rivera work also holds the record for most paid ever for a Latin American piece of art, not just at auction.

That work, which the Mexican artist completed in 1928, went to a private Argentine collector, Eduardo Constantini, for $15.7 million in 2016. It was entitled “Baile en Tehuantepec.” Baile means dance.

The website ARTnews said “The Rivals” went to an unnamed collector bidding by phone.—AFP

“Two Nudes in the Forest (The Earth Itself)”

An expert restores a mural by Diego Rivera, whose painting “The Rivals” now holds the record for the highest price paid at auction for a Latin American artwork. PHOTO: AFP
Leeds United co-hosts football clinic for kids in Yangon

WITH the joint cooperation of the Myanmar Football Federation and Leeds United Football Club, a football programme for Myanmar children titled the Leeds United Foundation Kids Football Clinic was held yesterday morning at the National Football Academy in Yangon.

The president of the Myanmar Football Federation, U Zaw Zaw, the British Ambassador, Mr. Andrew Patrick, Leeds United Football Club’s Owner, Mr. Andrea Radrizzani and several athletes attended the event.

The trainers of Leeds United Club and the team’s professional football players shared their knowledge and skills along with their experiences with 250 young, enthusiastic Myanmar youths during yesterday’s event.

Leeds United arrived in Myanmar on 7 May and played a friendly match with the MNL all-star team on 9 May in Yangon. They will play another friendly with the Myanmar national football team at Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay today.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

England recall Cipriani for South Africa tour

LONDON — Danny Cipriani’s three years in the England wilderness came to an end when he was recalled by coach Eddie Jones on Thursday for next month’s tour of South Africa.

The Wasps fly-half, regarded as one of the most talented English players of his generation, has not played for England since the build-up to the 2015 World Cup — when Stuart Lancaster was the Red Rose coach.

Cipriani’s stop-start international career has been interrupted by injuries, while his occasionally colourful off-field lifestyle has not endeared him to several England coaches.

But the 30-year-old has been in fine form for Wasps this season and he now has the chance to add to a tally of 14 Tests caps, the first won back in 2008, after convincing Australian coach Jones to include him in a 34-man squad for a three-Test series against the Springboks in June. ‘Done what I asked’

“I’ve picked him for the first time,” said Jones of Cipriani. “I’ve watched him closely and he’s looking good. He deserves his opportunity. “He’s done a few things I’ve asked him to do.” Hurricanes captain Brad Shields, set to join Wasps, was one of seven uncapped players in Jones’s squad despite being midway through the Super Rugby season. With regular skipper Dylan Hartley still recovering from concussion, Saracens centre Owen Farrell has been appointed England captain for the tour, while Danny Care, James Haskell and Dan Cole have been rested. But Jones has selected several players who went on last summer’s British and Irish Lions tour, including the Saracens quartet of Farrell, Maro Itoje, Mako Vunipola and Billy Vunipola, who is returning after being out with a broken arm.

England head to South Africa following a miserable end to the Six Nations when they lost successive matches to Scotland, France and Grand Slam champions Ireland. England had only lost one previous match under Jones since the former Wallaby and Japan boss took over following England’s first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup.—AFP