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State Counsellor encourages students in Hmawby, Hlinethaya townships

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, accompanied by the Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government, U Min Thu, and officials, visited the Basic Education Post Primary School in Kalar Kone Village-tract, Hmawby Tsp, Yangon Region at 11:20am yesterday.

The State Counsellor and entourage were welcomed by Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, the regional chief minister and his cabinet, Hluttaw MPs, department officials, the headmaster, teachers, and students.

The State Counsellor then observed KG students learning lessons, looked at their art drawings, and applauded their paper artworks.

The State Counsellor also observed the 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th, and 3rd grade classrooms in session. She instructed the students to eat nutritious food in order to grow up into fit and healthy citizens, to avoid wasting food, and to focus on their studies. She also made suggestions to fulfill the school's requirements.

The State Counsellor then met with the parents from the parent-teacher association, the headmaster and teachers in the library. She asked about the school's requirements and gave suggestions and advice on fulfilling them.

The State Counsellor then met cordially with the local



KG students of the Basic Education Post Primary School in Kalar Kone Village-tract, Hmawby, show their origami creations to State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 25 January. **PHOTO: MNA**

people of Hmawby Tsp. The B.E.PPS in Hmawby Tsp has 449 students.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and entourage travelled

to Hlinethaya Tsp and visited B.E.H.S (1) in Tabin Shwe Htee Street, Ward 2. They observed the 9th, 8th, and 7th grade classrooms in session and praised

the orchard garden planted by the students in the school compound. The State Counsellor then met with the headmaster and teachers in the school's as-

sembly hall where she asked about the school's requirements and gave suggestions and advice on fulfilling them.

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Fourth-day meeting of Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 11th regular session held

By Aye Aye Thant (MNA)

THE second Pyithu Hluttaw's 11th regular session held its fourth-day meeting at the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday, where asterisk-marked questions were answered, a motion tabled and a reported read and submitted.

Asterisk-marked question session

In the asterisk-marked question session, Dr. Than Aung Soe of Minhla constituency raised the question of how many numbers of pharmacy degree holders and of whether the plan is being implemented for creation jobs for them, status of vacancies in government and private sectors. Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe replied that pharmacy degree holders were employed as government employees in Department of Human Resources for Health, Department of Medical Service, Department of Medical Research, Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory and in Yangon General Hospital.

In the private sector, they were employed in production and quality control and quality assurance sections of pharmaceutical factories. In addition to local private companies, foreign pharmaceutical companies employ them as medical sales persons.



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat. PHOTO: MNA

They are also employed in pharmaceutical products related jobs of private hospitals. Many were also employed in pharmaceutical imported companies.

B Pharm graduates were also employed as medical expert-2 (medicine) and chief medicine inspector in Food and Drug Administration. After serving five years and depending upon vacancy, they were promoted to executive officers explained the Union Minister. The asterisk-marked question session then continued with Daw Khin Saw Wai of Yathedaung constituency asking if there is a plan to employ in a timely manner vacant positions in the Yathedaung Township, Moe Se Kyun Ku Taung station hospital. Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe answered that a neighbourhood hospital doctor will be employed in 2019

April. At the moment one out of two senior nurses had been employed and one out of four nurses was employed. One more nurse was employed on 21 January. One daily-wager was also employed. The Union Minister remarked on understanding the requirement in the difficult region of Rakhine State and will consider employing more in the forthcoming budget.

Next U Ne Lin Aung of Mindat constituency asked if there is a plan to construct a standard 16-bed hospital in Mindat Township, Makuiimnu town and Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe said 5.8 acre of land in a new ward of Makuiimnu Ward had been earmarked a project land. At the moment the department is conducting field measurement and once necessary land orders were obtained fund will be allocated in the 2019-2020 Budget.

The support of the State head, Hluttaw representative and General Administration Department is required to obtain the land order said the Union Minister.

The Union Minister added further that at the moment Makuiimnu town is using water mainly from spring water and the site where the hospital is planned to be constructed is about 5 miles away from the spring water source. Therefore at the moment the hospital cannot be constructed where there is no water. If the land and water is obtained with the support of Hluttaw representatives, General Administration Department and Chin State government, budget will be allocated in the forthcoming year said the Union Minister.

Similarly questions raised by U Maung Myint of Mingin constituency, U Steven of Kengtung constituency, U Ohn Lwin of Nyaungdon constituency and U Khin Maung Thi of Loilem constituency were answered by Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe.

Motion for Union Government to promote sports sector with fund

After the asterisk marked question session, Dr. U Sein Mya Aye of Dala constituency tabled a motion urging the Union Government to promote sports sector

by allocating fund so that new generation youth grow up healthy and alert while people of working age are physically and mentally developed and free from drugs and other bad influences. He provided detailed explanation about the reason for tabling the motion and the motion was supported by U Kyaw Soe Win of Kawhmu constituency. After obtaining the decision of the Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced the Hluttaw's agreement to accept and discuss the motion. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced further for Hluttaw representatives who want to discuss the motion to register their names.

Reading of 2017 Land Confiscation Bill report

Next Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat informed the Hluttaw about the receipt of 2017 Land Confiscation Bill approved and sent with amendments by Amyotha Hluttaw and Bill Committee member Daw Mar Mar Khaing read the committee's report on the bill. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker then announced for Hluttaw representatives who want to submit an amendment motion to register their names. The fifth-day meeting of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 11th regular session will be held on 28 January it is learnt. ■ (Translated by Zaw Min)

Amyotha Hluttaw

2nd Amyotha Hluttaw holds fourth-day meeting of its 11th session

By Aung Ye Thwin, Lu Maw (MNA)

THE fourth-day meeting of the 11th session of the 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw was held yesterday in the Amyotha Hluttaw meeting hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

Substitutions of the Chairman, Secretary and members of the Hluttaw Committees

At the meeting, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than obtained the approval of the Hluttaw after nominating for Chairman, Secretary and members of the Public Accounts Committee, the Hluttaw Rights Committee, the Government's Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee, the Local and International Non-governmental Organizations Committee, the Local and Overseas Employment Committee, the Public Complaints Committee, the Agriculture, Livestock



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. PHOTO: MNA

Breeding and Fishery Development Committee of the Amyotha Hluttaw.

Q & A session

U Sai San Aung of Shan State constituency 12 asked the question if there was a plan to open a district office under the Department of Religious Affairs in Hopon Township, Hopon District, Wa Self-administered Division. Regarding this query, Deputy

Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Kyi Min replied that there was no plan, at the moment, to open the office.

Constructing a public market

U Lal Ming Thang of Chin State constituency asked the question if there was a plan to construct a municipal market in Matupi Township in 2019-2020 FY. Then Nay Pyi Taw Council

member U Nyi Tun replied that arrangements were being made to invite any interested business personnel to make an investment for building a three-storey Market. U Win Maung of Magway Region constituency 6 asked the question if there was a plan to dig up sand and silt in the Myaungmadawgyi from the Linzin Dam, the Salin ditch and the Sinbyukyun ditch, and to make renovation for the Township Office in Kyowon region. Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw replied that the Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department was making arrangements to dig up sand and silts to improve the water flow of the ditches, while using the budget allocation of the Union Budget Fund. Moreover the Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department would carry out the house renovation works in 2019-2020 FY.

Q & A

Similarly, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw replied the queries raised by U Kyaw Toke of Mandalay Region constituency 7 and U Naing Thiha of Mon State constituency 7 respectively.

An amending bill of the Myanmar Engineering Council Law

Next, Secretary of the Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee Dr. Myat Nyarna Soe read a report on the Bill Amending the Myanmar Engineering Council Law to make a discussion at the Hluttaw. Afterwards, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker announced that interested Hluttaw representatives should register their names to discuss the bill. The fifth-day meeting of the 11th session of the 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw will be convened on 28 January. ■

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

State Counsellor encourages students in Hmawby, Hlinethaya townships

FROM PAGE-1

There are currently 2,889 students attending B.E.H.S (1) in Hlinethaya Tsp. The school had a matriculation exam pass rate of 14.99 per cent in 2015-2016 academic year, 19.29 per cent in 2016-2017, and 19.99 per cent in 2017-2018.

Next, the State Counsellor and entourage visited B.E.M.S (5), a B.E.H.S branch, located on the corner of Bogyoke Road and Myawaddy Road in Ward 1, Hlinethaya Tsp. They observed the KG, 3rd, and 5th grade classrooms where they gave encouragement to the students, and then asked about the school's

... encourage acquiring knowledge by reading in libraries, to hold physical exercise programs to synchronize students' physical and mental development ...



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with school children in B.E.H.S (1) in Hlinethaya Township, Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

requirements and gave suggestions and advice on fulfilling them. The B.E.M.S (5) has 4,100 students attending from KG to 11th grade.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and entourage visited B.E.PPS (19) on Ba Htoo Street 8 in Ward 2, Hlinethaya Tsp. They

observed the KG and Grade II classes in session, the extracurricular activities for primary to middle grades, and praised the students' paper artworks.

During her conversations, the State Counsellor asked the requirements for promoting the quality of education and realiz-

ing the future objectives of the students. She gave instructions to encourage acquiring knowledge by reading in libraries, to hold physical exercise programs to synchronize students' physical and mental development, to understand the essence and ideas of Myanmar's literature

and poems, and to consider a future career as a teacher in the education sector to greatly support the nation.

Later in the evening, the State Counsellor and entourage took a flight from Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw. —MNA ■(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi engages with the students at B.E.M.S (5), a B.E.H.S branch in Hlinethaya, Yangon Region yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with school children in B.E.P.P.S (19) on Ba Htoo Street 8 in Ward 2, Hlinethaya, Yangon Region yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

VP U Myint Swe addresses MSMEs Product Exhibition & Competition opening ceremony

THE Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Work Committee (MSMEDWC) Chairman Vice President U Myint Swe addressed the opening ceremony of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Product Exhibition & Competition in Myeik, Taninthayi Region at the Myeik Public Corporation Ltd. Hall in Myeik Town yesterday morning.

In his address the Vice President said under the leadership of MSMEDWC MSMEs Product Exhibitions & Competitions were conducted in states and regions starting from February 2018. They have been held in Mandalay, Magway, Patheingyi, Taunggyi, Monywa, Bago, Yangon and Mawlamyine. This MSMEs Product Exhibition & Competition in Taninthayi Region Myeik Town is the ninth such event. The final one, a national level product exhibition and competition with the participation of all states and regions would be held in the Union territory Nay Pyi Taw where National Awards will be presented.

The remarkable thing about this ninth MSMEs Product Exhibitions & Competitions was that in addition to businesses from states and regions in Myanmar MSME businesses from Thailand were also participating in it. So there would be an additional benefit of MSMEs from Myanmar and Thailand sharing and studying the product qualities and innovations of one another in order to cooperate. In this exhibition and competition not only MSMEs from Taninthayi Region but also



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the opening ceremony of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Product Exhibition & Competition in Myeik, Taninthayi Region yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

from Yangon, Bago, Kayah and Mon region/state were seen to be exhibiting. It was becoming obvious to the MSME businesses that participating in these exhibitions and competitions was beneficial. MSME businesses had learnt first-hand that people from all levels come to visit these exhibitions enabling the MSMEs to hear the voices and feedback of the people, make timely improvements, advertise products and services and expand markets.

Another arrangement by MSMEDWC was granting permission to award winning products of MSME businesses in the MSME Product Exhibitions & Competitions to use MSME Logo recognized by MSMEDWC. In February 2019, the MSME Logo competition would be held where the best logo would be selected. By granting permission to award

winning MSME businesses to use this logo, consumers would have more trust and confidence in the award winning products and would support market expansion of these products.

In February 2019, the MSME Logo competition would be held where the best logo would be selected.

By holding exhibitions and competitions of regional products all over the country, the quality

of the MSME products would be raised and there would be more import substitutions; contacts would be made between the local production sector and the trading sector; MSMEs would be transformed from traditional family business to world standard products and services providers with innovation and entrepreneurship; know the requirement of the consumers, expand markets and participate in the Global Value Chain.

According to the 2014 census, Taninthayi Region has a population of more than 1.4 million on a land area of 43,328 square kilometer. On the north there is Mon State. Thailand is on the east and south while on the west there is Andaman Sea. It had many opportunities for economic development. On the Myeik archipelago, white and old gold natural and cultured pearl could be produced. Elephant Foot Yam, Kan Zaw herbal oil, rubber and palm oil plantations, bird nest or swiftlet nest, aqua culture and fishery works were abundant in Taninthayi Region. In addition to this, Maungmagan Beach, pagodas like Dawei Ko Myo Shin, Taninthayi mountain range, the sea and the archipelago could attract local and international visitors and the expanding travel business would surely develop the economy of the region.

The Dawei Special Economic Zone project was a project that would support the development of the region. Basic infrastructure works during the preliminary stage include construction of a two-lane road, urban housing and jetty, electricity distribution and communications works and would create a lot of job

opportunities for the local people. Emphasis must be placed towards enabling the entry of skilled workers into these new jobs and worksites. Prospective businesses in the region were to be systematically established and expanded. The Union Government, Region Government and the private sector were to cooperate and work towards obtaining technical assistance and investment, producing skilled workers and create new markets.

To raise capital for MSMEs, the Union Government was providing government loans, JICA Two Step Loan to Government arrangement with the Government of Japan and KfW Loan conducted with the Government of Germany for the MSMEs. In addition to this, loans under the Credit Guarantee Insurance (CGI) system were being provided.

On the human resources and technical support sector, entrepreneur courses, business capacity building courses, intellectual property and consumer protection courses, business plan preparation courses, business and financial management courses, production technology practical courses, consumer and agri-based products production and technology courses, upgrading and technology transfer courses on fish/prawn breeding and aqua culture and vocational training courses were being conducted under the arrangement of Ministry of Industry and regional MSMEs as well as in cooperation with international organizations and private entities.

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Vice President U Myint Swe inspects pearl production at the pearl farm on Pale Island, Bokpyin Township in Taninthayi Region yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

VP U Myint Swe addresses MSMEs Product Exhibition & Competition opening ceremony

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Therefore MSMEs in the region would become responsible businesses that produce products required by the consumer in line with the changing and progressing situation in Myanmar and establish a sustainable socio-economic environment. They were to strive towards providing international level products and services by connecting with local and foreign businesses.

The Vice President urged the MSME specifically to develop their works and aim towards raising the socio-economic situation of the entire people of Myanmar.

Next, MSMEDWC member Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Daw Lei Lei Maw explained about the status of works conducted for the development of MSMEs in the Region.

Afterwards Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho, Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Daw Lei Lei Maw, Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nang Khin Htwe Myint and Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan accepted donations made by companies and businesses to conduct the exhibition and competition and presented certificates of honor to the donors in return.

Following this Vice President U Myint Swe attended a meeting with people who took loans from Myeik Public Corporation Ltd. micro-finance scheme.

At the event Myeik Public Corporation Ltd. Project Director U Thet Soe explained about micro-finance scheme and socio-economic development service works while a representative of the people who took a loan



Vice President U Myint Swe poses for a commemorative group photo with attendees in the 9th MSMEs Exhibition & Competition in Myeik, Taninthayi Region yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

explained about the loan taken.

The Vice President in return remarked on using the loan systematically to expand capital and investment and the requirement to conduct vocational training courses that were appropriate for the region.

Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win then explained about loans provided by the ministry.

After this event, Vice President U Myint Swe and party went to attend the opening ceremony of MSMEs Product Exhibition & Competition (Taninthayi Region, Myeik Town) at the Myeik Shopping Center in Myeik Town.

At this ceremony Vice President U Myint Swe, Union Minister U Khin Maung Cho, Tanin-

thayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Daw Lei Lei Maw, Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nan Khin Htwe Myint, Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan, Deputy Ministers Dr. Ye Myint Swe, U Aung Htoo and U Maung Maung Win and Prachuap Khiri Khan Province Deputy Governor cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the exhibition and competition and then took commemorative group photos with ceremony attendees.

Vice President U Myint Swe and party then inspected the exhibits displayed in the 9th MSMEs Exhibition & Competition. Later, the Vice President and party went by helicopter to Pearl Island, pearl breeding camp and inspected the pearl

breeding works and displayed pearls where Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Permanent Secretary U Min Min Oo provided explanations while Deputy Minister Dr. Ye Myint Swe provided additional explanations.

The Vice President urged the responsible officials to increase exports of pearls to the international market.

The event was attended by MSMEDWC Vice Chairman Union Minister for Industry U Khin Maung Cho, committee members Taninthayi Region Chief Minister Dr. Daw Lei Lei Maw, Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nan Khin Htwe Myint, Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan, Taninthayi Region Hluttaw

Speaker U Khin Maung Aye, Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Dr. Ye Myint Swe, Deputy Minister for Commerce U Aung Htoo, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win, state/region ministers from Kayin and Mon State and Taninthayi Region, Taninthayi Region Advocate General, Taninthayi Region Auditor General and Hluttaw representatives, high ranking Tatmadaw officers, heads of departments, Thailand Prachuap Khiri Khan Province Deputy Governor and representatives, organizations, experts and technicians, donors, MSME business owners and officials. ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Authorities discuss arrangements for Lancang-Mekong cultural heritage site workshop

A COORDINATION meeting on organizing the Workshop on Managing Cultural Heritage in Lancang-Mekong Countries was held at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko explained that the meeting intends to share the knowledge, experiences and good practices of managing cultural heritage sites in Lancang-Mekong Countries.

It also aims to network with other cultural organizations, promote cooperation on cultural affairs between Mekong

countries and China, promoting the skills and capabilities of all participants in the managing of cultural heritage sites, and to support the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The Union Minister said managing cultural heritage sites is an important part of preserving and promoting cultural heritage.

He said this will strengthen the cultural identity of a nation and its people. He added that the workshop has invited representatives actively involved in managing the cultural heritage sites of Lancang-Mekong

countries and China. Afterwards, the Director-General of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum and attendees discussed sending of invitations, welcoming reception, catering, decoration, security, health services, and punctual news releases concerning the upcoming workshop. The Union Minister gave suggestions and advice as necessary. Myanmar will be hosting the Workshop on Managing Cultural Heritage in Lancang-Mekong Countries in Bagan from 18 to 22 February.—MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo) ■



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko addresses the coordination meeting for organizing cultural heritage workshop in Lancang-Mekong Countries yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung attends meeting on border region development works

UNION MINISTER for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung attended a coordination meeting 1/2019 on border region development works implemented in fiscal year 2018-2019 held at the ministry's assembly hall yesterday morning.

At the meeting Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of current border region development works implemented in fiscal year 2018-2019 with Union fund and requested suggestions on vital works that should be conducted for sustaining the works. The Union Minister also discussed on the matter of border region development works planned for fiscal year 2019-2020 to be conducted with Union fund, related works to be conducted with state/region funds, preventing overlaps in project works, ensuring transparency in conducting border region development works with Union, state and region budg-



Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung addresses the coordination meeting on border region development for 2018-2019 fiscal year in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

ets, to cooperate with a sense of duty and responsibility and the requirement to openly discuss benefits from conducting border development works and

difficulties faced.

Next Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department Director General explained about border region

development works implemented with funds allocated to states, regions and self-administered zones and region from the fiscal 2018-2019 fund.

Afterwards state/region ministers, self-administered zones and region leading body chairmen explained about vital works that should be conducted for sustaining the border region development works, works on roads, bridges, piping of groundwater seepage and from other water sources, requirements and wishes of the local populace.

Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Than Htut then explained about cooperation and participation of state/region governments, self-administered zones and region members in the border region development works, dos and don'ts according to set policies, questions raised by Hluttaw representatives being answered in coordination with Union, state/region levels and implementation of pilot project on substituting opium.

Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung coordinated on the discussions.— MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Ethnics Culture Fest & Travel Business promotion festival kicks off

OPENING ceremony of Ethnic Culture Fest and Travel Business promotion festival organized by Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs' Association (MEEA) was held at Sports and Physical Science Special Guest Hall in Kyaikkasan Grounds, Yangon yesterday evening.

The ceremony starts with students from National University of Arts and Culture, Yangon singing the Ethnic Culture Fest theme song.

Next Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin delivered an address speaking of the presence of all ethnic nationals and thanked the organizer MEEA committee members and donors who supported the event. The entire world wanted peace and stability and our ethnic nationals who are living in the Union need to be united. All must strive toward establishing a peaceful and stable union, said the Union Minister.

Afterwards Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung said the day's fest and festival depicts the friendship and unity of ethnic nationals as well as displaying and maintaining the cultures and practices of our ethnic brothers and sisters. In the world today people are display-



Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs, Nai Thet Lwin, addresses the opening ceremony of Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest at Kyaikkasan Sports Grounds in Tamway Township, Yangon Region. **PHOTO: MNA**

ing their unique and authentic traditions and cultures while maintaining it for long term. They are also displaying these to international tourists.

The diverse and unique traditions and cultures of our 135 ethnic nationals are intangible and tangible cultural heritages that are major travel attraction and resources. Therefore a festival that raises knowledge about Myanmar to the world is a momentous one said the Union Minister U Ohn Maung.

Yangon Region Chief Minister then delivered a speech followed with remarks by MEEA patrons Peace Commission Chairman Dr. Tin Myo Win and Dr. Aung Tun Thet and a speech of thanks by MEEA Chairman U Yawd Sek.

After the speeches, Union Ministers and guests took commemorative photos and were entertained with ethnic national dances and entertainment programs. —MNA ■

(Translated by Zaw Min)



A dance troupe performs at the opening ceremony of Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar-Philippines sign MoU on information sector cooperation

A ceremony to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on information sector cooperation between Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Information and Philippines Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO) was held at the PCOO meeting hall yesterday afternoon. Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint and Philippines PCOO Secretary Jose Ruperto Martin M. Andanar signed and exchanged the MoU.

Later a Myanmar delega-

tion led by Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint met with Philippines PCOO Secretary Jose Ruperto Martin M. Andanar and high ranking officials and cordially discussed bilateral cooperation on media and information.

Present at the ceremony and meeting were Myanmar Ambassador to Philippines U Win Naing, PCOO Under-Secretaries Marvin R. Gatpayat, George A. Apacible and Loreaire T. Badoy and officials, it is learnt.—MNA
■ (Translated by Zaw Min)



Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint and Philippines PCOO Secretary Jose Ruperto Martin M. Andanar sign the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on information sector cooperation. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister discusses cleft lip and palate operation with Faces of Tomorrow



Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe holds talks with Faces of Tomorrow founder and Director Dr. Brian Rubinstein at the ministry's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe received and discussed cleft lip and cleft palate operation with Faces of Tomorrow founder and director Dr. Brian Rubinstein and party at the ministry's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting Dr. Brian Rubinstein and party said the Faces of Tomorrow was formed in 2007 and according to its theme "Brighter smiles for a brighter future" it had been conducting medical, surgical and follow up services to children with facial deformities around the world free of charge and explained about surgeries it had conducted together with Ministry of Health and Sports in Myanmar.

Union Minister Dr. Myint Htwe said much experience was

obtained by Myanmar dentists and dental surgeons when they conducted cleft lip and cleft palate operations with Faces of Tomorrow members. As the capabilities of the nurses from Face of Tomorrow were found to be very high, having nurses from state/regions participate in the surgeries will make them gain much experience. The ministry is making it a priority to raise the capacity of nurses and midwives and told of his desire for Faces of Tomorrow to conduct surgeries on cleft lips and cleft palates together with Myanmar surgeons and nurses so that Myanmar surgeons and nurses gain experience and expertise in cleft lip and palate surgery and other corrective surgeries.—MNA
■ (Translated by Zaw Min)



Journalists gather news from local people during their trip to Donethein temporary camp in Buthidaung Township in northern Rakhine State. **PHOTO: THET LWIN SOE (IPRD)**

Local, foreign journalists prerform media coverage in Buthidaung Tsp

A GROUP comprised of local and foreign media personnel from Tokyo Shinbum, The Mainichi Newspaper, Sankei Shimbum, Nippon TV, TBS, AFP, Wall Street Journal, MI Radio, MITV, MRTV and MNA, arrived at the Donethein temporary camp in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State, where they observed the ground situations.

There are totaling 263 displaced people, including 43 ethnic households, at the Donethein temporary camp, where the media personnel collected news from them. They then proceeded to the Dabyuchaung Village, where they met with Muslim fam-

ilies. In the afternoon, the media group arrived back to Yangon by air from Sittway.

The media groups have been allowed access to Rakhine State one-time in 2016, eight times in 2017, six times in February, 2018, 15 times in the arrangement of the Advisory Board for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State, making a total of 30 times media tours. The Committee for Implementation of the Recommendations on Rakhine State has been making arrangements for conducting two guided media trips per month within 2018.—Myo Myint (MNA)
(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

Physical achievements draw people closer, strengthen Union Spirit

To bring light into the lives of our ethnic brethren across the country, the nationwide electrification plan is being implemented. Access to electricity drives the productivity of households, empowers women, and enables education and communication. Electrification develops not just our lives, but also opens the path to better opportunities for future generations.

We are confident that electrification will shine the light on future opportunities for our ethnic brethren.

Roads and infrastructure are important for connecting all of us and for developing our economy. Electrification supports communication efforts within the country and the whole world.

These nationwide achievements were brought about by understanding the needs, concerns, and hopes of local ethnic people, and can help spread the Union spirit among them.

supply power to villages in Maungtwaw Township. Meanwhile, employees of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy fulfilled their duties and responsibilities by completing the more than 63 miles long 66-KV cable linking Punnagyun and Maungtwaw, passing through Yathedaung and Buthidaung, and sub-power stations at the cost of Ks20 billion.

Besides, 1,530 households in Yathedaung in Rakhine State have been provided with electricity since 15 March last year thanks to the Yathedaung sub-power station, and 3,374 households were linked with a local sub-power station in October last year.

The recent achievements signal a significant milestone in our development, enabling ethnic nationals living in different areas to form closer bonds and strengthen loving kindness.

These nationwide achievements were brought about by understanding the needs, concerns, and hopes of local ethnic people, and can help spread the Union spirit among them. They also show the cetana (goodwill) and care we have for all ethnic nationals.

Every citizen is valuable to the nation. Despite living in different areas, we are truly living on the same land and drinking the same water. To gain further achievements in terms of security and socio-economic development of all ethnic people, all are urged to work together with the Union Spirit.

By July Moe
(Myanma Alinn)

CURRENTLY in some areas of the Regions and States of the country, various pests such as that of Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC) (Spodoptera Mauritica) (SM) have infected the winter crop of corn and maize in the fields of Myanmar at an alarming degree and situation. Despite timely pest controls and protection have been carried out, some acres incurred damage and loss, but some winter crop of corn could have been saved.

The Plant Protection Division of the Myanma Agricultural Service (Department of Agriculture under Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation) has conducted a seminar on 5 January 2019 on the infection of pests namely Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC) (SM) with the collaboration of CABI (The Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International) and Exeter University (The University of Exeter is a public research university in Exeter, Devon, South West England, United Kingdom) providing information on the infection of pests in some Regions and States of the country.

Locusts, armyworm, fruit flies, banana diseases, cassava diseases and wheat rusts are among the most destructive trans-boundary plant pests and diseases. Plant pests and diseases spread in three principal ways: trade or other human-migrated movement, environmental forces – weather and windborne, it is learnt.

Mostly in Shan State, Sagaing Region and Nay Pyi Taw Area, and some areas of Chin State and Kachin State are found to have the risk and possibility of infection of RSC.

Infection of Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC)

The early estimation has projected that of the high risk areas are in Shan State, Rakhine State, Chin State, Kayah State, Nay Pyi Taw Area, Sagaing Region, that of the medium risk areas are in Yangon Region and Tanintharyi Region, and that of the low risk areas are in Mandalay Region,



Magway Region, Bago Region, Ayeyawaddy Region, Mon State, Kayah State and Kachin State.

Currently, Myingyan Township in Myingyan District of Mandalay Region, Tatkon Township of Nay Pyi Taw Area, Kyaing Tong Township of Shan (East) State, Nyaungdone Township, Danuphyu Township, Zalun Township, Hinthada Township of Ayeyawaddy Region have experienced the infection of Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC) in the fields of corn and maize, according to the information released from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

“In these areas, the Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC) have been infected since second week of January, and that due to the pests infection, the early and young age crops of corn and maize have been damaged, however, the matured corn crops are saved from damaged,” said farmer U Myint Zaw.

“Currently, about (2000) acres of crops have been infected with the pests. When the pests infected the areas in Zalun Township, the necessary plans for plant protection and pests control are being carried out by the Myanma Agriculture Service.

Some months back, the Union Minister for Agriculture, and the Chief Minister of the Region made field trips and delivered awareness talks,” he continued.

Therefore, getting rid of pests has become an urgent and pressing requirement for farmers in Myanmar, and stakeholders must consider it a priority.

“Moreover, various spray methods of pesticides and the plant protection techniques were disseminated, and it has achieved some benefits. In the past years, the infection of RSC could be controlled by spraying with the insecticides. However, this year the infection of Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC) are very hard to kill and to get rid of as they do not die through the spraying. The female moths produced eggs into insects that eat away the plants from the base, and the worst scenario is that the germs are easy to multiply, making us helpless to get rid of the pests,” farmer U

Myint Zaw explained about the devastating pests.

Fall Armyworm larva vary from light tan to black with three light yellow stripes down the back. There is a wider dark stripe and a wavy yellow-red blotched stripe on each side. Larvae have four pairs of fleshy abdominal pro-legs in addition to the pair at the end of the body. Fall armyworm resembles both armyworm and corn earworm, but fall armyworm has a white inverted “Y” mark on the front of the dark head. The corn earworm has an orange-brown head, while the armyworm has a brown head with dark honeycombed markings. Fall armyworm has four dark spots arranged in a square on top of the eighth abdominal segment.

Fast spreading

The current winter corn and maize crops areas is estimated at (150,000) acres in December, and that in Myingyan Township it is infected with Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC), and in a few weeks the time it spread to other Regions and States.

Currently, the pests have infected (100,000) acres in Ayeyawaddy Region, and they are destroying all the unripe crops as well as matured crops. The pest control tasks are required the whole year round. Such infection



of pests had occurred in India and in Bangladesh in 2016.

The responsible persons of the areas and the agricultural professionals are providing necessary assistance in the prevention, protection and control of pests in their field trips.

In the infected areas by the Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC), pesticides spraying tasks through the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) have been carried out. In the uninfected areas, early plant protection measures are being undertaken, according to the Myanma Agriculture Service.

At this time of winter corn and maize season, the Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC) grew heavily and spread very fast, and destroyed the plants, incurring grave loss to the farmers.

The local farmers and cultivators are required to constantly check their plots whether it is likely to have the pests, and seek assistance from the local authorities and the officials in the regions and states in fighting against the pests, citing to the advice given by Deputy Director-General U Hla Myint Aung.

Feature of Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC)

Spodoptera Mauritica (SM), the lawn armyworm or paddy swarming caterpillar, is a moth of the family Noctuidae. The spe-

cies was first described by Jean Baptiste Boisduval in 1833. Able to eat many types of food, it is a major pest throughout the world

The wingspan is about 40 mm. It is dark grey brown with a rusty tinge on its body. The pests could eat up (80) varieties of various crops including rice, ground nuts, vegetables and yellow colored crops, according to agronomists. The pests destroyed the corn crops very easily and the germs grew very fast and spread rapidly.

The farmers could get rid of the pests in many ways such as that of spraying strong pesticides, that of picking up by hands and clearing away, that of lighting up trap fire near the plants, that of clearing the weeds, that of turning upside down the earth in the plant areas, that of clearing away the eggs and maggots, that of sending Mantis that have enormous appetites, eating various aphids, leafhoppers, mosquitoes, caterpillars and other soft-bodied insects when young, that of spraying strong pesticides in the morning and in the evening, according to Agricultural Officer U Saw Win.

Timely protection

The farmers are now cultivating winter corn and maize, and that Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC) are giving troubles to the farmers, and that the cultivators could seek assistance and help from the officials of the Myanma Agriculture Service, and that early prevention and protection could be carried out so that safe and secure condition is being assured.

Beginning fourth week of December 2018, total of (142,120) acres in Ayeyawaddy Region is recorded as sown acreage, where (136,013) acres in (15) townships of Patheingyi, Hinthada, Maubin and Myaungmya districts had experienced of pests infection of Fall Armyworm (FAW) and Rice Swarming Caterpillar (RSC).

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, there is possible risk of economic loss on (39,572) acres, and that (6,559) acres have been so far damaged. Therefore, getting rid of pests has become an urgent and pressing requirement for farmers in Myanmar, and stakeholders must consider it a priority.

Translated by UMT (Ahlon)

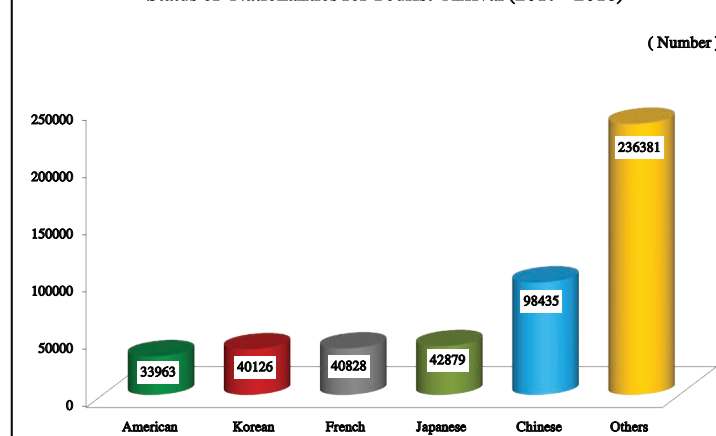
Getting rid of pests urgent and pressing need for Myanmar farmers

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Permanent Secretary

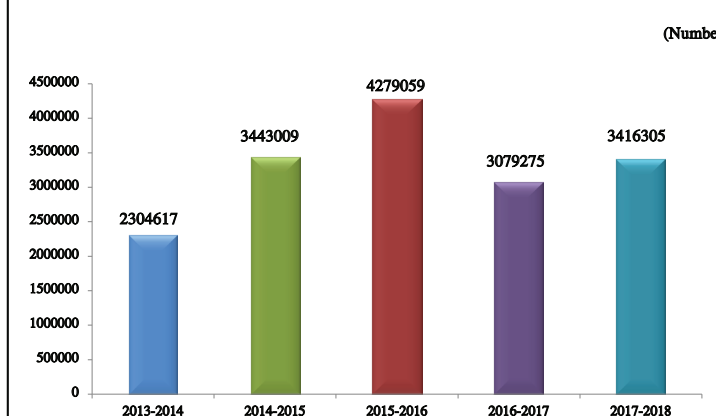
The Union Government has appointed U Aung Soe, Director-General of Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization of the Ministry of Commerce, concurrently as Permanent Secretary of the same ministry.

Status of Nationalities for Tourist Arrival (2017 - 2018)



Source: Ministry of Hotel and Tourism
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

Status of International Tourist Arrival



Source: Ministry of Hotel and Tourism
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.). – Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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

Rural people enjoy pot carrying game in Sagaing

RURAL people in Sagaing held a traditional folk game of "pots carrying" in celebration of a local monk's ascending to the monastery of Obo village on 24 January, attracting tourists and people from nearby areas.—U Ko Min (Indaw) ■

(Translated by JT)



PHOTO: U KO MIN (INDAW)

New chili pepper, tamarind enter Yangon market

NEW chili pepper started entering the Yangon region market in the middle of January, said merchants.

New chili pepper from Hinthada and Myanaung, cultivated with seeds from India, was selling at a wholesale price of K4,300 per viss when it entered the Yangon region market. But the price fell to K3,900-4,000 per viss on 23 January. The prices

of Shan and Kyauk Ye long chili peppers also declined to around K4,000 from K4,600 per viss. The price of Indian chili pepper also fell to K4,300 from K4,600 per viss.

Chili pepper is grown in the delta regions after the harvesting of the monsoon paddy. Therefore, new chili pepper is expected to enter the market at the end of March, said mer-

chants. In 2018, the price of new chili pepper from the delta regions declined to a record K2,200 per viss in the wholesale market.

The price has increased to about K3,800 per viss. Tamarind started entering the Yangon region market at the end of December. On 23 January, the prices of tamarind fell by K150-K200 per viss.

"Although new tamarind

has been entering the market, traders wishing to store the crop for a year usually buy it in March," said a local tamarind seller.

Although the prices of tamarind increased to about K3,500 per viss in 2017, they fell to K1,500 per viss in 2018, according to merchants.—Maung Say Aung ■

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Four-year-old girl drowns in boat accident in Inle Lake

A four-year-old girl reportedly fell overboard into Inle Lake after the motorized boat her family was travelling in collided with another boat on Thursday. Her body was found at a depth of six feet near the accident site.

The girl was travelling with her parents and two-month-old sister from north to south on the lake. Their boat was being driven by Wa Toke, also known

as Aung Thet Phyto, 19, from Ywarma village. The driver of the second boat has been identified as Zaw Oo, 26. The accident took place at 5.30 p.m. on 24 January. The girl's body was fished out and taken to Nyaungshwe Hospital.

The Nyaungshwe Police have initiate action against the two boat drivers under the existing laws.—Translated by La Woon ■

Weapons, drugs seized in Tachilek

ACTING on a tip, officials with the police and the anti-drug squad searched a car and seized weapons and drugs from it in Tachilek Township of Shan State (West) on 24 January. Two men have been charged in the case. They have been identified as Sai Lone Than, 33, and Kyaw Kyaw Win, 46. The authorities found Sai Lone Than carrying a gas gun and 17 drug tablets, while they found Kyaw Kyaw Win carrying a pistol made in Australia and of the Glock

Ges.m.b.H brand with 12 bullets.

In a separate case, authorities stopped and searched a motorcycle, driven by Maung Ba, 48, en route from Aungpinle village to Tachilek around 10.55 p.m. the same day, and seized 1.2 grams of heroin. In connection with the case, the authorities arrested a 25-year-old man for selling drugs at Wankaung market. The Tachilek Police have filed a case against the two men.—Sai Yaung Khan ■

DaNa Facility, Snacks Mandalay to jointly invest \$3.1 mln in spices market

THE DaNa Facility, a UK Government Department for International Development (DFID) funded programme, and Snacks Mandalay, a food processing company, yesterday announced a joint investment of \$3.1 million in an innovative new project, Three Star Chili, focused on increasing the number of spice farmers in the Mandalay Region involved in their supply chains.

The programme will engage 4,000 poor farmers into high value crop supply chains and providing training to increase incomes.

The investment supports direct purchasing of spices from farmers at the spot-market price in Yangon, 16% - 23% higher than the price farmers traditionally get from traders. Snacks Mandalay will then process and sell the spices through organic and conventional channels in domestic and foreign markets.

Through improving the processing of spices to international standards, Snacks Mandalay will sell products in premium markets for higher market prices. This is a win for poor farmers

and a win for Snacks Mandalay.

Speaking at the launch event the Head of DFID Myanmar, Dr Gail Marzetti, said "we see that it has significant potential to increase the incomes of farmers, transform the production and quality of spices in Myanmar, and help the market become more efficient and inclusive."

Also speaking in Mandalay Dr. Pyae Phyto Aye, Managing Director of Snacks Mandalay said: "Sustainability is a goal for everyone involved in the whole value chain of our busi-

ness. Through this project, we will provide a stable market and more income for Myanmar farmers and create job opportunities for women labourers through farming."

The project is specifically targeting spices farmers who are amongst poorest with incomes of less than K 170,000 per family - equivalent to the international \$1.90 poverty line. The typical net earnings of these farmers is about K 90,000 per person per month, with women earning around 30% less than men.—GNLM ■

Freshly harvested green gram fetches high price in Yangon market

NEWLY harvested green gram has begun entering the market in the Thongwa Township of Yangon Region, with growers selling it at a high price, according to wholesalers.

Wholesalers said the price of green gram was K44,500 per basket on 25 January. Each basket contains 20 viss (72 pounds) of green gram. The price has increased by K11,500 compared with last year, when a basket of green gram was fetching K33,000. The price of green gram is usually volatile at the beginning of the harvest period. The price is expected to change, depending on the production.

In Thongwa Township, growers are mainly cultivating monsoon paddy and marketable

varieties of green gram. Green gram can be harvested two and a half months after planting. Normally, local growers start planting green gram in the second week of November. Growers estimate that almost all green gram plantations will be ready for harvest in mid-February. U Tin Myint Aung, the head of the Thongwa Township Agriculture Department, said depending on the climate, quality of soil, seeds, fertilizers and other inputs, an acre of green gram can produce over 20 baskets of the crop. For the 2018-2019 Financial Year, the acreage of winter green gram in the township stands at 129,984 acres, he added.—Ko Kyaw (Thongwa) *(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)*



Fresh green gram prices increased by K 11,500 compared with last year in the Yangon market.
PHOTO: KO KYAW (THONGWA)

Myanmar International Furniture Expo 2019 to be held at Tatmadaw Hall

By Nyein Nyein

THE Myanmar International Furniture Expo 2019 will be jointly held by the Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association and the Wood-based Furniture Association from 14 to 17 February at the Tatmadaw Exhibition Hall. The objectives behind the expo include improving Myanmar's furniture industry, shifting to value-added production, creating jobs, alleviating poverty, improving import-substitution businesses, encouraging value-added producers, holding international furniture expos, and upgrading technology by linking with international producers.

"The two associations have a number of producers and exporters. The event will help them connect with local and foreign buyers," said U Kyaw Thu, the chair of the Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association. Sixty companies will showcase their products at more than 160 booths during the four-day expo. At present, Myanmar exports furniture made

of bamboo, rattan, and wood to markets in the US, the Republic of Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, and the EU. The exports of bamboo, rattan, and wood furniture fetch over US\$20 million per year, according to the Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association. "The income from bamboo, rattan, and wood exports has reached \$20 million. But, earnings should have increased. In the last 30 to 40 years, Myanmar has exported teak logs and raw materials as the country was affected by the poor infrastructure. There are over 700 rattan and bamboo companies in Viet Nam. But Myanmar has 30 to 40 value-added rattan and bamboo enterprises. We need to make efforts to increase the number of value-added producers and help them grow their business," said U Kyaw Thu. The Myanmar International Furniture Expo is a biannual event organized by the two associations. This will be the tenth expo for value-added furniture products made of bamboo, rattan, and wood. ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

Trade deficit shrinks to \$1 bln as imports fall

A decline in imports in the first quarter of the current fiscal year helped narrow the trade deficit to US\$1 billion from \$1.4 billion recorded in the corresponding period of the previous financial year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 October and 11 January, Myanmar's external trade increased to \$9.15 billion from \$8.97 billion registered in the same period of 2017-2018 FY. Exports increased by \$284 million to reach \$4 billion, while imports fell by \$100 million to touch \$5

billion. Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, finished industrial goods, and imports capital goods, intermediate goods, CMP raw materials, and consumer goods.

The country relies more on the agriculture and manufacturing sectors for exports. While export earnings from the CMP (cut, make, and pack) garment businesses are rising, the country's reliance on natural resources such as natural gas and jade is lessening.

The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports.

Myanmar's trade deficit stood at \$91.9 million in the 2012-2013FY, \$2.5 billion in the 2013-2014FY, \$4.9 billion in the 2014-2015 FY, \$5.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY, \$5.5 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$1.3 billion in last six-month mini-budget period, according to statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO).—Mon Mon ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

Myanmar-Japan Nov trade declines nearly 4%

MYANMAR'S trade with Japan in November, the second month of fiscal year 2018-2019, totalled US\$146 million, a decline of \$5.9 million, or 3.9 per cent, from the same month in the previous fiscal, the Ministry of Commerce reported. The total bilateral trade figure for November includes \$103 million in exports and \$42 million in imports. Compared with November 2017, the import value decreased by half, but exports increased by almost \$37.8 million. Normally, Myanmar's imports exceed its exports in bilateral trade with Japan, conduct-

ed by sea. Myanmar's exports to Japan cover garments, marine products, rice, sesame, rubber, and other agricultural products. Its imports from the East Asian country include machines, electronic devices, fertilizers, chemical products, medicines, and automobiles. In October, the first month of the 2018-19 FY, Myanmar's total trade with Japan was registered at \$152.197 million, with exports of \$65.54 million and imports worth \$86.6 million.

During the mini-budget period (April-September) in 2018, the country's total trade with Ja-

pan reached nearly \$1.095 billion, increasing by \$170 million from \$925 million recorded in the corresponding period of the previous year. The Myanmar Investment Commission permitted two Japanese enterprises to bring in foreign direct investments of \$5.526 million in the first two months of the current fiscal year, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration. Japan's investments in Myanmar in the mini-budget period totalled \$134.6 million.—Khine Khant ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Onion prices fall back in Yangon market

ONION prices are falling in the Yangon market this harvest season due to the low demand, said local wholesalers.

At present, the market has seen a massive inflow of freshly harvested onions, but the demand

for the kitchen crop is not strong, said merchants.

Depending on their size and freshness, onions were fetching between K200-1,150 per viss (3.6 pounds) on 23 January in the Yangon wholesale market, which saw

an inflow of 180,000 tons of the crop from onion-producing areas, including Myingyan and Seikpyu townships. In the Pakokku market, onion prices have declined to K500 per viss, while a viss of onions is selling for about K450 in the

Yenangyoung market. This fiscal year saw a decline in exports of onions via sea, but the crop is being exported to neighboring countries through the border gates. There has been no demand from Viet Nam and Malaysia in

the current FY. Local merchants said onion prices are expected to upswing in the market after the middle of this year, when onions grown in the cold season usually enter the market and demand for the crop is strong.—Maung Say Aung ■ *(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)*

Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin opens archway to Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest

MYANMAR Ethnic Culture Fest was formally opened with a ceremony unveiling its archway at the Kyaikkasan Sports Ground in Tamway Township, Yangon Region yesterday.

Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs, Nai Thet Lwin, delivered the opening speech. He first thanked the Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association (MEEA) for organizing the culture fest, as it provides an opportunity to materialize the close relations and unity of all the ethnic races in Myanmar.

Myanmar is a Union all the ethnic races are living together in, and as such, ethnic solidarity is of critical importance, said Nai Thet Lwin. He said this solidarity is essential for implementing peace, which in turn will drive

socioeconomic development. He said the various ethnic races in Myanmar may historically hold different perspectives. He said it is possible to cast aside our differences and combine our similarities as we move forward or still unite with our differences in hand. He said our nation can be united even with these differences.

He said organizing culture fests such as this one will knit ethnic races together by exposing them to the different customs and traditions of each other. This will dispel doubts between the ethnic brothers and sisters and establish firm trust that will pave the way for the success of the peace process and establishing a democratic federal union.

The Union government is



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin and officials cut ribbon to open Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest. **PHOTO: MNA**



Kayah ethnic cultural troupe performs at Ethnic Culture Fest. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chin ethnics troupe play traditional music. **PHOTO: MNA**

providing leadership to the all citizens striving to establish this democratic federal union, said the Union Minister. He said the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong has already held its third session, where they managed to establish fundamental principles on democracy and federalism. He said if all the ethnic races succeed in building lasting mutual trust and cooperation then we will be able to strengthen national reconciliation and unity, which will lead to a peaceful and prosperous democratic federal union.

The Union Minister said his ministry is always actively promoting ethnic languages, literature, traditions and culture. He requested every ethnic race to value the traditions and culture from other ethnic races as much as they did to their own. He said the basic need for economic development is good infrastructure and sufficient energy. While the Union government is working hard in that area, businesses from the private sector also need to chip in to boost development,

said the Union Minister.

The Union Minister said with the variety of ethnic races displaying their tradition, customs, regional products and other aspects of their lives, in addition to the Miss Ethnic Myanmar 2019 pageant, attendees will feel as if they are in all the states and regions at once. He expressed his desire to hold consecutive culture fest in Yangon and other parts of the country. The Union Minister said it is important for regional products to penetrate into the global market so as to attract more foreign tourists, raise the standard of regional products on par with global brands, and to bring in benefits to the nation.

Next, Yangon Region Minister for Rakhine Ethnic Affairs, U Zaw Aye Maung, delivered a speech and MEEA Chair U Yaw Set explained the motives for organizing the culture fest.

Afterwards, Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin, Union Minister for Commerce Dr. Than Myint, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung, MEEA Patrons Dr. Tin Myo Win, Chair

of the Union Peace Commission, and Dr. Aung Tun Thet, regional minister U Zaw Aye Maung, regional minister for Kayah ethnic affairs Naw Pan Thinzar Myo, MEEA Chair U Yaw Set, Vice-Chair L Pai Kunsar, general secretary U Min Banyar San, and Mr. Ai Min and Mr. Zhang Rui from Inner Mongolia Kincaid Industrial Group, formally opened the archway for Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest.

The Union Ministers, officials and invited guests then toured the ethnic culture exhibits, business exhibits, and Kachin manaw dance at the culture fest.

The Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest will be open from 11 am to 10 pm every day from 25 to 30 January. The culture fest will include performances from famous artists, the Miss Ethnic Myanmar 2019 pageant, various exhibition booths on ethnic culture and way of life, an ethnics night market, game activities, and over 800 stalls selling food and souvenirs. —Yi Yi Myint, Ohmar Thant ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Kayan ethnic dance troupe entertain the visitors with traditional dance. **PHOTO: MNA**



Kachin delegation performs Manaw dance at Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest. **PHOTO: MNA**

Thura U Shwe Mann receives UN's Special Envoy on Myanmar, US Ambassador separately



Thura U Shwe Mann holds a meeting with US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Scot Marciel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

CHAIRMAN of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann separately received UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Ms. Christine Burgener yesterday 11:30 am and US Ambassador to Myanmar,

Mr. Scot Marciel at 2 pm on the same day at Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting with the Special Envoy on Myanmar, stability and development of the Rakhine State, right understanding by international communities for peace in

Myanmar and the rule of law were cordially discussed.

During the meeting with the US Ambassador, cooperation and developmental processes of the two countries were cordially discussed. —MNA
■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye receives Special Envoy of UNSG

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye received Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener, Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General on Myanmar, yesterday morning, at the Maykhalat Hall at the Minister's office in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed matters relating to drawing up a strategy on closing down the internally displaced persons camps, preparing Fact-Sheet to give true information for the repatriation process, forming Pyithu Hluttaw committee to check the appeal and complaint letters, rendering humanitarian assistance to the people displaced by

AA attacks, the movements of Red Cross Association in cooperation with ICRC and IFRC, drawing up schemes by the committee on implementing the recommendations on Rakhine State for cooperation with related ministries, cooperation with AHA centre, attracting in-

vestments to Rakhine State, the status of amending the child rights law and formation of National Committee and work committees for Preventing Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflicts. — MNA
(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye shakes hands with Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener. **PHOTO: MNA**

Foreign Banks Selection Board holds first meeting

THE Foreign Banks Selection Board of the Central Bank of Myanmar held its first meeting at the CBM in

Nay Pyi Taw yesterday to carry out its foreign banks selection processes.

The CBM will allow

further foreign banks to develop the country's economy and to strengthen the financial sector. —MNA

Trade with India in November up over 39%

BILATERAL trade between Myanmar and India topped US\$147 million in November, the second month of 2018-2019 fiscal year, with exports worth \$72.8 million and imports valued at \$74.5 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Compared with the same month in the previous FY, Myanmar-India trade has increased by \$41.6 million, or 39 per cent. In November 2017, bilateral trade between the countries was valued at \$105.7 million, with exports worth \$25.6 million and imports totalling \$80 million.

Myanmar conducts trade with India via both the sea and border routes. The two countries trade goods mainly through the Tamu and Reed border checkpoints.

In October, the first month of the 2018-19FY, bilateral trade totalled \$153.365 million.

Myanmar exports areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves, fishery and forest products, and human hair to India. Its imports medicines, oil cakes, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and construction materials.

According to the ministry, trade with India reached its peak of \$1.9 billion in the 2016-2017FY. The figure dropped to \$1.47 billion in the 2017-2018FY.

During the 2018 mini-budget period (April and September), bilateral trade exceeded \$800 million, with \$292 million in exports and \$508 million in imports.

According to DICA, Indian investment in Myanmar during the mini-budget period was \$19.9 million. The country has seen no new investments from India in the current FY.—Swe Nyein

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

Myanmar's imports decline \$155 million in current fiscal

THE value of Myanmar's imports in the 2018-2019 fiscal year has exceeded US\$5.4 billion, a drop of nearly \$155 million from the corresponding period of the previous financial year, the Ministry of Commerce reported on Friday. Between 1 October and

18 January, Myanmar imported capital goods worth nearly \$1.8 billion, intermediate goods worth \$1.9 billion, consumer goods worth over \$1 billion, and CMP products worth \$673 million.

Apart from CMP products, imports of remain-

ing goods declined in the current FY. Compared with the same period in the previous FY, imports of capital goods declined by \$127 million, intermediate goods by \$79 million, and consumer products by \$83 million. During the period, the private sector import-

ed goods amounting to \$5 billion, a decline of \$197 million from the previous FY. In comparison, public sector imports rose by \$42.5 million from the previous fiscal year.—Shwe Khine ■

(Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (032 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (032 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/A.I.P.T 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUZURAN VOY. NO. (027 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ALS SUZURAN VOY. NO. (027 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-01-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T 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 INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

120 investment opportunities worth over US\$3 bln to be showcased at Invest Myanmar Summit in Nay Pyi Taw

OVER 120 regional and private business projects worth a total potential value of more than USD\$3 billion (about MMK\$4.6 trillion) will be showcased at the upcoming Invest Myanmar Summit, happening on 28 and 29 January 2019 at the Myanmar Convention Centre 2 (MICC-2) in Nay Pyi Taw. Local and international investors who attend the event will be among the first to explore key investing projects in Myanmar.

“With the projects on showcase, local and international investors at the Summit will have a very clear picture of the prospects they can look forward to when investing in Myanmar; the industries they can invest in, and types of projects open to them in each state and region,” said U Zaw Min Win, President,

Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (‘UMFCCI’).

One of these prospects is the development of Myotha Industrial Park City (‘MIPC’) in Mandalay Region. The MIPC currently holds the highest value in the Project Data Bank thus far and promises to open up to 33,700 jobs in 5 target industries: infrastructure, labour intensive-industries like food and wood processing, capital-intensive industries like pharmaceutical and renewable energy production, consumer services and producer services like banking and finance.

Other highlights of the Summit include the launch of the National Project Bank, a centralised database of key projects which will enable ef-

fective implementation of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Programme (‘MSDP’), and the participation of ten of Myanmar’s regions and states. “We will be unveiling two key information packages at the Invest Myanmar Summit 2019,” said U Wai Phyo, Chairman of Invest Myanmar Summit 2019. “The first is the MSDP, the second the National Project Bank. Summit participants will be the first to hear key facts and insights from Dr. Set Aung and U Min Ye Paing Hein, the authors of these two landmark documents.”

Other speakers at the Summit will include State Counselor H.E. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, newly minted Union Minister of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations H.E. U

Invest Myanmar

On 28 and 29 January 2019 at the Myanmar Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw.

Thaung Tun, Mr. Serge Pun, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of New Yangon Development Company Ltd., and Mr. Yuan Shaobin, Managing Director of CITIC Group (Myanmar) Co., Ltd.

As the first nationwide collaboration between Myanmar’s Central Government and its private sector, the Summit will host Union Government Ministers, key representatives

from eight key industries, and State and Regional government representatives. Private business exhibitors will also be present to showcase their business projects and speak with prospective partners.

Attendees of the Summit will also have the option to request appointments with key Ministry and industry representatives to facilitate targeted, fruitful discussions.— GNLM

U Maung Shwe (a) Nr. B.L. Goenka receives Overseas Indian Award



Thiri Thudamma Manijotadhara U Maung Shwe (a) Nr. B.L. Goenka was one of the 193 recipients of The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (Overseas Indian Award) conferred by President of India Mr. Ram Nath Kovind this year.

He accepted the award in India and returned to Myanmar yesterday evening. He was welcomed by, people from Hindu communities in Yangon, and organizations at Yangon International Airport.—GNLM ■

Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun inspects newspaper press houses in Zeyathiri Township

THE Deputy Minister for Information, U Aung Hla Tun, inspected the Myanma Alinn, the Kyemon, and Nay Pyi Taw newspaper press houses and the printing house of the Printing and Publishing Department, all located on Khayay Pin Junction, Zeyathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw, and met with their staff yesterday.

Firstly, the Deputy Minister and entourage inspected the clinic and recreational room opened in the Nay Pyi Taw newspaper press house and gave instructions as necessary. They then inspected the training hall, library, pre-press department, computer training room, and the printing press museum.

The Deputy Minister then visited the nursery opened for families of staff members. He gave presents to the children there and inspected the children’s outdoor playground, the futsal court, volleyball court, and sepak takraw court built for the staff’s physical wellbeing. The Deputy Minister then inspected the staff residential buildings, including the single dormitories, the fruits, vegetables and flower orchards, and the low-cost product stalls. Next, the Deputy Minister inspected the process of school textbooks for the Ministry of Education printed at the



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun inspects the pre-press processes at the press house of the News and Periodicals Enterprise in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

printing factory and guided officials to complete the printing task on time. The Deputy Minister then inspected the newsroom and printing press of Myanma Alinn and Kyemon newspapers. He listened to explanations from officials and gave suggestions as necessary. In the afternoon, the Deputy Minister met with staff from the News and Periodicals Enterprise and the Printing and Publishing Department in Boewazira Hall.

He said while he does not have the chance to meet with the staff regularly, he always has intentions on meeting cordially staff. He said they will only be able to provide quick and effective solutions if staff members voice their concerns and challenges. The various staff members then discussed organizing seminars on health and social protection

education, setting up mobile medical examination and treatment clinics, organizing staff excursion trips, working for increased opportunities for staff to write articles under pseudonyms, and explained the difficulties in gathering information from other departments. The Deputy Minister responded to the staff’s presentations and gave suggestions and advice as necessary. Following this, U Aung Myo Myint, Director-General of the Printing and Publishing Department, and U Ye Naing, Managing Director of the News and Periodicals Enterprise explained the completed tasks for fulfilling the staff’s requests, and future plans to fulfill the remaining requests. Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun then delivered the closing speech and concluded the meeting. —MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

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Underground in Jerusalem, a rare look at an ancient tomb

JERUSALEM — Flashlight beams pierce the darkness and reveal an archaeological gem in underground Jerusalem few have had the chance to glimpse in recent years.

The elaborate, 2,000-year-old tomb's stone shelves once held sarcophagi, and its steps are hewn from rock connecting its chambers.

It serves as a remarkable example of a Roman-era tomb — considered among the largest in the region — but it remains closed for now and largely forgotten in a corner of east Jerusalem.

Talks are ongoing between France, which owns the site known as the Tomb of the Kings, and Israel to reopen it, and AFP was recently given an exclusive tour. “We are talking about probably the most important, fascinating and large monument in Jerusalem outside the Old City,” said Yuval Baruch, Jerusalem regional archaeologist for the Israel Antiquities Authority.

The tomb has been closed since 2010 due to renovations costing around a million euros (\$1.1 million). But its unique status, Jewish veneration of the burial site and its location in the disputed city have added to complications in reopening it. Archae-

ological sites in east Jerusalem are often freighted with religious significance and questions linked to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Tomb of the Kings is no exception, though with international involvement since France owns it. Israel occupied mainly Palestinian east Jerusalem in the 1967 Six-Day War and later annexed it in a move never recognised by the international community. It sees the entire city as its capital, while the Palestinians view the eastern sector as the capital of their future state.

France wants guarantees

Groups of ultra-Orthodox Jews have gathered at the tomb's gate to press for its reopening so that they can pray there. They describe it as a holy burial site of ancient ancestors.

“All we ask is to enter, make a prayer and leave,” said Natanel Snir, who was part of a group of around 12 ultra-Orthodox Jews who briefly gathered outside the gate Thursday. There has also been a challenge at Israel's rabbinical court — which rules on matters related to Jewish law and holy sites — over access to the tomb and France's ownership.

A concert at the site organised with a Palestinian group



Talks are ongoing between France, which owns the site known as the Tomb of the Kings, and Israel to reopen it. **PHOTO: AFP**

around a decade ago also led to criticism. The court case has been abandoned for now at the request of Israel's foreign ministry, but there are discussions about whether to resume it, said Rachel Shakargy of the Israeli rabbinical courts.

Before reopening the site, France wants guarantees it will not face legal challenges and is asking for commitments on how visits will be managed.

French officials declined to comment, while Israel's foreign

ministry said negotiations are continuing, without elaborating.

Both states are concerned it could become more of a religious than archaeological site after its reopening. In the meantime, an iron gate leading to ancient steps, ritual baths and the expansive tomb further below remains locked.

Queen's tomb?

Both the history of the site and how France came to own it are complex. An excavation in the

1860s, when the Ottoman Empire ruled the region, is thought to be the first modern archaeological dig in the Holy Land, said Jean-Baptiste Humbert, a French archaeologist who has carried out excavations at the tomb.

Felicien de Saulcy of France took on the project in 1863 and sought to confirm it was the tomb of biblical figures King David and Solomon, giving rise to the site's name. That theory has been ruled out, but the name has endured.

Several sarcophagi were found inside and are now in the Louvre museum in Paris, including one with an Aramaic inscription.

According to the most commonly accepted theory, it refers to Queen Helena of Adiabene, in today's Iraqi Kurdistan, and she may have built the tomb for her dynasty. She is thought to have converted to Judaism and her remains may well have been buried there. Whether or not that is the case, the site is also believed to have been reused over the years.

After de Saulcy's excavation, the tomb was purchased by the Pereire brothers, a Jewish banking family in Paris that would later hand the property over to France.— AFP ■

Remains found of explorer who put Australia on the map



The coffin plate of Royal Navy captain Matthew Flinders, unearthed during excavation work at St James's Gardens near Euston station in London. **PHOTO: AFP**

SYDNEY (Australia) — The remains of the first British explorer to circumnavigate the Australian continent and popularise the country's name have been found near a busy London railway station.

Archaeologists sifting through a vast burial ground near Euston station said Friday they had found a coffin plate identifying the last resting place of Royal Navy captain Matthew Flinders.

Flinders was buried on 23rd July 1814, but not before publishing “A Voyage to Terra Australis,” which described his circumnavigation of Australia in 1802-1803 that proved it was a continent.

“Flinders put Australia on the map due to his tenacity and expertise as a navigator and explorer,” said Helen Wass, an archaeologist overseeing the dig for the HS2 high speed rail project.

With an estimated 40,000 remains at the site, archaeologists were not sure they were going to find Flinders, whose resting place had been subject to much speculation.

“We were very lucky” said Wass, he “had a breastplate made of lead meaning it would not have corroded.”

“We'll now be able to study his skeleton to see whether life at sea left its mark and what more we can learn about him.”

Flinders is a hero for many Australians of European origin, with stations, streets, squares and towns across the country named after him.

The discovery of his remains comes on the eve of “Australia Day” a controversial national holiday which falls on the date of the arrival of the British First Fleet to Australia.

Many Australians view the Fleet and men like Flinders as harbingers of the decimation of ancient Aboriginal societies and cultures. There is added controversy over the role of an aboriginal Australian aide to Flinders named Bungaree, who has been largely eclipsed by his British captain, but who historians now believe played a crucial role in success of the voyages.— AFP ■

India launches Kalamsat, Microsat-R satellites

NEW DELHI — The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C44 carrying Kalamsat and Microsat-R, officials said Friday.

The satellites were launched from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota, off the Bay of Bengal coast located in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh at 11:37 p.m. (local time) on Thursday. “India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C44) successfully injected Microsat-R and Kalamsat-V2 satellites into their designated orbits,” a statement issued by ISRO said. Television images show the rocket blasted off from the launch pad, emitting a bright orange flame from its tail and moving upwards in the sky. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the space scientists for another successful launch of PSLV.—Xinhua

Koreans urge 'Monster' Kim to choose Watford over Beijing

ABU DHABI (United Arab Emirates)—South Korea defender Kim Min-jae's goal-scoring exploits at the Asian Cup have not gone unnoticed overseas, but team-mates are urging him to follow Son Heung-min to England rather than go to China.

The 22-year-old centre-back, nicknamed "Monster", has burnished his reputation as one of the region's hottest prospects, scoring twice and proving formidable at the back as South Korea reached the quarter-finals.

Baek Sung-kwon, general manager of his current club Jeonbuk Motors, confirmed a bid from Premier League club Watford which is reported to be around \$8 million.

Beijing Guoan, who finished the 2018 Chinese Super League season in fourth, are also in the hunt but so far, Kim is keeping his cards close to his chest.

"Until now, I want to focus only on the Asian Cup," he said on Thursday.

"I just want to talk about getting good results and so, at the moment, I haven't got anything to say about (a transfer).

"I just want to focus on helping the team not concede any goals."

Kim is already an established international, but missed the 2018 World Cup through injury.

A move to Tottenham Hotspur in the Premier League proved the making of Kim's celebrated team-mate Son, while Ki Sung-



South Korea defender Kim Min-jae is weighing up offers from Watford and Beijing Guoan. **PHOTO: AFP**

yueng and ex-Manchester United star Park Ji-sung have also prospered in England.

And while Kim may be staying silent, his Chinese-based team-mates at the Asian Cup have been happy to give their advice—and they are urging him to take the plunge in England.

"If Min-jae has big ambitions then it will be better for him to play on a bigger stage," said his central defence partner Kim Young-gwon, who has won two Asian Champions League titles and six Chinese championships with China's Guangzhou Evergrande.

"Of course, China is good but I think it would be better for him to play on the bigger stage that is Europe."

Kwon Kyung-won, who also plays in the Chinese Super League for Tianjin, gave similar advice.

"I thought that he was going to China but then I heard good news and I hope he can make the better choice," said Kwon.

The players were repeating the sentiment expressed on social media back in Korea as fans urged Kim, whose nickname stems from his powerful physique, to choose England.

Since moving to Tottenham Hotspur in 2015, Son has turned into a global star, becoming the highest scoring Asian player in Premier League history and also shining in the Champions League.

However, the Chinese Super League is also attractive to Asian players because of its high wages and proximity to home. —AFP ■

We'll do our best against Yangon United: Win Naing Tun

YADANARBON F.C. forward Win Naing Tun has expressed his confidence his team will do their best and clinch a victory in the match against Yangon United F.C. on 27 January, according to the Myanmar National League.

"Previous matches have not been easy on us, but I think we are getting better and better. We have been training rigorously and will do our best in the match against Yangon United," said the young striker.

Win Naing Tun also invited fans to cheer at the match, which will be played at the Ba Htoo Stadium in Mandalay, the home of the Yadanarbon F.C.

"The match will be among the most thrilling matches of the Myanmar National League," he added.

The previous two matches of the Yadanarbon F.C. ended in a draw, and so the team needs more wins to advance against defending champion Yangon United,



Yadanarbon F.C.'s striker Win Naing Tun. **PHOTO: YDNBFC**

ed, which is still leading the MNL scoring table with two wins.

"Each move on the pitch will tell the story of the two teams' skills and decide who wins,"

said Win Naing Tun. The match, scheduled to start at 3.30 p.m, will be broadcast live on MRTV and MRTV-4 channels.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

MFF's four-year plan to ensure the Asian Lion flies high

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) has recently drawn a strategic plan for 2019-2022 for the Asian Lions, the men's and women's national football teams, including Futsal, for success in international matches.

The MFF aims to drive the Myanmar team's qualification for the 2026 World Cup according to the four-year plan. The federation also hopes the national team will qualify for the AFC Asian Cup in 2023 and reach the

semi-finals of the AFF Suzuki Cup in 2020, said a source with the MFF.

For achieving better results, the MFF signed Belgium technical director Eric Abrams in October on a three-year contract.

The technical director expressed his confidence about the plan to empower the national teams.

"We are going to work on our development. For our

football community to be more developed, we need to do work on our organization, mission, vision, national teams and national academies, coaches education, the grassroots, futsal and beach soccer," said Eric Abrams. "So we'll do what is the priority for the next six months, the next year, or the next 3-4 years. I have to make an analysis of our current strengths and weaknesses," he added.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Rahm seizes early lead at Farmers, Woods opens with 70

LOS ANGELES (United States)—Jon Rahm had two eagles on his front nine in a sizzling 10-under 62 Thursday to grab a one-shot lead at the Farmers Insurance Open where Tiger Woods is making his 2019 debut. Spain's Rahm, whose first win on the US PGA Tour came at this event two years ago, is one stroke ahead of world number one Justin Rose and American Doug Ghim, who both shot nine-under 63s.

"There's a lot of happiness going on in this area for me, so I just feel I'm going to play good

when I tee up," Rahm said.

Fourteen time major winner Woods birdied his last hole of the day to post a 70 and is eight shots back of Rahm at the Torrey Pines Golf Course in La Jolla, California. Taiwan's C.T. Pan is fourth after shooting a 64 and Jordan Spieth is alone in fifth with a seven-under 65. The 24-year-old Rahm came into the event as one of the hottest players on the tour and his start reflected that as he eagled both par-fives on his front nine, including the opening hole. —AFP ■