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State Counsellor, Sri Lankan FM discuss promotion of bilateral relations



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Mr. Tilak Marapana, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received Mr. Tilak Marapana, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, who is on an official visit to Myanmar, at 10 am on 11 April 2019

at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the meeting, the State Counsellor and Foreign Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka discussed various issues on promoting bilateral relations in the areas of the economy,

tourism, religious affairs, socio-cultural cooperation and enhancing people-to-people contacts. They also discussed enhancing cooperation between Myanmar and Sri Lanka at the regional and multilateral fora including BIMSTEC and the United Nations.

Also present at the meeting were U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation, Senior Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Myanmar and members of the Sri Lankan delegation.—MNA

NRPC, KNU hold meeting in Nay Pyi Taw

THE National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) and the Karen National Union (KNU) held a meeting at NRPC in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, NRPC member Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo delivered an opening speech saying following the simultaneous announcements by KNU and RCSS after October 2018, the peace discussions were temporarily suspended and during this period NRPC and KNU had held six informal meetings.

Those meetings were held by both sides in a positive way so that the peace process was not suspended, to prevent moving from difference in opinion toward armed conflict and to prevent harms from falling on locals who would be most affected. Due to those efforts and thanks to all who had strived toward this, no big conflicts arose during the time when the peace process was suspended.

It was usual for a peace journey to have lows and highs and rises and dips. The main point was for the participants to have a strong political and personal will toward establishing peace. Armed conflicts in Myanmar were born together with its independence and were known in the world and all as the longest running armed conflict. Generations have witnessed the armed conflict and to date it had not ceased.

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Committee on Supporting Peace & Stability in Rakhine State provides cash to IDPs

A delegation led by Chairman of the Committee on Supporting Peace and Stability in Rakhine State Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung paid homage to and heeded the advice of Sayadaws and Sanghas in Sittway at Saddhama Garu Monastery yesterday in Kondan Ward in Sittway yesterday.

At first, the committee chairman said the committee was in Sittway to support peace and stability in Rakhine State. The committee had met with Rakhine political parties, civil society organizations, town elders, experts and well anyone that ought to be met. He then explained about the work process of the committee toward peace and stability in Rakhine State.

They then heeded to the advices and comments of Dekhina Rama monastery patron Sayadaw, Saddhama Garu Thein Kyaung monastery Sayadaw, Mani Yadana monastery Sayadaw and sanghas for Rakhine State peace and stability.

Next, the committee

chairman U Aye Tha Aung, deputy chairman Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint and committee members donated offertories to the Sayadaws and Sanghas.

Afterwards committee deputy chairman Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint, committee members Deputy Minister U Tin Myint, Yangon Region Minister for Rakhine Ethnic Affairs U Zaw Aye Maung and State Hluttaw representative U Maung Maung Ohn explained about the aims of forming the committee and the Sayadaws and Sanghas participation and support toward peace and stability in Rakhine State.

The committee then presented supports and assistance to IDPs in Rakhine State at a ceremony held in Rakhine State government office meeting hall 1.

The ceremony was attended by the committee chairman, deputy chairman and members, state government ministers, departmental officials, local elders



Committee on Supporting Peace and Stability in Rakhine State attending the ceremony to provide cash assistance to IDPs in Sittway, Rakhine State, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

from MraukU and Kyauktaw townships and officials from civil society organizations.

At the ceremony the committee chairman said the committee came to help and provide assistant to people facing difficulties due to conflicts in Rakhine State and IDPs.

The committee had met with people ought to be met for peace and stability in Rakhine State. Submissions, comments and suggestions were obtained and a report on short term and long term work processes will be submitted to the Government. The committee came for this reason and during this trip it'll provide supports and assistant to IDPs in MraukU and Kyauktaw townships through civil society organizations. Local elders from MraukU and Kyauktaw town-

ships and officials from civil society organizations were invited and requested to raise suggestions and any other matters relating to peace and stability in Rakhine State.

This was followed by committee deputy chairman Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint explaining about the aims of forming the committee and the support and assistance program for the IDPs.

The committee chairman then presented K 56.358 million for 6,262 IDPs from 19 camps in MraukU Township which was received by U Aung Thein of MraukU town Yatana Pala funeral assistance foundation.

Committee deputy chairman Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint also presented K 24.534 million for 2,726 IDPs from seven camps in Kyauktaw Township

which was received by Kyauktaw town elder U Aung Kyaw Thein.

Later, Kyauktaw town development committee chairman U Maung Win say words of thanks on behalf of the attendees.

Town elders and officials from civil society organizations in MraukU and Kyauktaw townships then suggested on reducing the ongoing conflicts, to resolve the matters through political means and to care for the board, lodging and health care of IDPs as the raining season was approaching.

The ceremony came to close after Committee on Supporting Peace & Stability in Rakhine State Chairman Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung delivered a closing speech. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Min)

Myanmar, Sri Lanka hold 3rd meeting of joint commission for bilateral cooperation

THE Third Meeting of the Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation between Myanmar and Sri Lanka was held at 3:30 pm on 11 April 2019 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. The meeting was co-chaired by U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Mr. Tilak Marapana, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed matters pertaining to strengthening bilateral relations and deepening bilateral cooperation in various sectors includes exchange of high level visits, trade and investment, tourism, religious and cultural affairs, transport and industrial sectors. They also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest as well as for closer cooperation in the multilateral context. The two



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin shakes hands with Sri Lanka Foreign Minister Mr. Tilak Marapana in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Ministers then signed the Agreed Minutes of the Meeting.

In the evening, the Union Minister for International Cooperation hosted a dinner in honour of the visiting Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka and his delegation at Shwe San Eain Hotel in Nay

Pyi Taw.

The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister and his delegation will also be visiting places of cultural and religious significance in Bagan and Yangon before leaving Myanmar on 15 April 2019. —MNA

Newspapers to be published in turn this Thingyan

THE Ministry of Information, News and Periodicals Enterprise announced that daily newspapers will be printed in turns during the Thingyan Festival.

While the Mirror and the Global New Light of Myanmar newspapers will be printed on 13, 14 and 15 April, and the Myanma Alinn will temporarily cease printing operations during this period.

While the Myanma Alinn will resume operations on 16 and 17 April, the Mirror and the Global New Light of Myanmar will temporarily cease operations on those days.

Similarly, the Mandalay news sector from the Sub-Printing House (Mandalay) and the extra pages in ethnic language from the Sub-Printing House (Myitkyina) will temporarily cease printing operations on 13 April, the extra pages in ethnic language from the Sub-Printing House (Mawlamyine) will temporarily cease printing operations on 14 April, and the Shwe Pyi Rakhine Ponyeik sector from Sub-Printing House (Sittway) will temporarily cease printing on 17 April and will resume normal production after Thingyan holidays.

Advertisements will be received at the newspaper offices, which will remain open during Thingyan. All newspapers will resume normal production starting 18 April. — News and Periodicals Enterprise

“ We will abolish the red tape that burdens the people and eradicate corruption and bribery that plagues all levels of society as we work to strengthen the moral fiber of our people. We will draw out from our past experiences as a civilian government overcoming various obstacles and hardships, as we work to the best of our ability for the immediate present and head towards the future of a democratic nation that respects human rights and is free from all stains of corruption.

(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)

“ Let us strive collectively for the emergence of a just and free nation— a nation which will guarantee equal rights and equality, a nation which practices a pure ideology.

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

NRPC, KNU hold meeting in Nay Pyi Taw



Members of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and representatives of the Karen National Union hold a meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

FROM PAGE-1

All of us did not start this armed conflict. We were all participating in the efforts toward ending the conflict and to achieve a sustainable peace.

It would be very easy to end the peaceful situation that had just been reached. Peacemakers were decisive and courageous people. KNU Chairman Phahti (father in Kayin language) Mutu Sae Poe had said that peace could be established only with courage while State Counsellor had said that negotiations and mediations required courage and valor.

International negotiations as well as during the early period of NCA negotiation had shown that when political discussions reached a serious stage, concerns on the security sector pulls back from all sides and thus the NCA was drawn up to resolve everything based on discussions and negotiations.

The Tatmadaw government and ethnic armed organizations that had signed the NCA had firmly pledged to cooperate and work together until completion of matters outlined in the NCA. The Declaration of the third session of the Union Peace Confer-

ence – 21st Century Panglong was made with the consent of all the representatives who were in attendance. The aim of the declaration was for all to strive towards achieving the targets at the various stages of the conference. But outsiders interpreted the declaration in various ways while relevant organizations and entities had also drawn up their own conclusions relating to it.

All need to bear in mind that during the time when the NCA was negotiated the sector on foreign participation was discussed in depth and with care.

Each organization and entity would have their own set policy and stand. But it was important that these policies and stands were not to be held onto firmly as a certain amount of flexibility and the right to give and take must be granted to the negotiators. Because in a political negotiation, it was not possible for any group to get every wish they had.

Negotiations would be successful only when mutual understanding and trust were established. The government, NRPC Chairman and the State Counsellor would not blame anyone. All were considered to be walking towards peace, travelling on the

same boat, on the same journey. Whatever problem or difficulty an organization or entity faced, we would all overcome and resolve it with good will through meetings and negotiations.

Looking back historically, it could be seen that political discussions were done only at our time through agreements by both sides. There were peace

not reached. Now, there were political discussions. These political discussions could be said to be the historical outcomes.

As this was the first ever political discussion in the country, no one had any experience in it. There would be indigestions, difficulties and challenges for sure. It was important that all consider these as difficulties and

The Union government wanted to start official discussions as soon as possible. To do this, it was ready to overcome and work on any difficulty together.

offers during the Revolutionary Council time but it had not been successful. During the Tatmadaw government period, ceasefire agreements were reached and political discussions were left to be conducted by the government that would come into power through the elections.

During the term of the previous government, up to eight ethnic armed organizations had signed the NCA. The Union Peace Conference was held according to a time table so the stage of political discussion was

challenges could be resolved through discussions and negotiations. As we change to a new situation from old, there would be resistance and frictions for sure. When creating change, resistance would be encountered. Political discussions would be smooth and successful if all groups helped one another and worked towards resolving each other's difficulties.

The Union government wanted to start official discussions as soon as possible. To do this, it was ready to overcome

and work on any difficulty together.

KNU leaders were highly appreciated for coming to the NRPC despite facing many difficulties. All were urged to openly raise the difficulties faced so that a solution could be found together, said the Union Attorney General.

In return the KNU General Secretary Pado Saw Tado Moo said the aim of coming over for an informal meeting was to discuss how to overcome the differences. Even though it was an informal meeting, discussions should be open and free based on country, situation and political culture.

Only then could we find a solution towards how to go on. The KNU would like to reiterate that it had firmly resolved to carry on as stated in the NCA. We cherish and value the achievements of the NCA and the result of the political culture existing between us. We expect to achieve a definition with the understanding and trust of the other side. We believe that we were facing these difficulties because we have never had this experience before in the peace process.

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Senior General visits Huangshan, takes high speed train to Guiyang



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and entourage arrive to take a high speed train at Huangshan Railway Station.
PHOTO: OFFICE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

TATMADAW Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party who were in Beijing on a friendly visit left Nanyuan public/military airport, Beijing yesterday morning and were seen off at the airport by Maj-Gen CiGuowei of the Chinese People's Liberation Army international military cooperation office and officials.

The Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and party arrived at the Huangshan Tunxi International Airport, Huangshan City, Anhui Province in the afternoon and were welcomed by the provincial military head and officials. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party toured Huangshan City on cars and then left for Guiyang North Railway Station by high speed

rail from Huangshan Railway Station. On arrival at the Guiyang North Railway Station the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief and party were welcomed by senior officers from the Chinese People's Liberation Army according to news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

NRPC, KNU hold meeting in Nay Pyi Taw

FROM PAGE-3

Although the NCA came about from two differing situations, we need to continue our discussions until reaching a mutually acceptable situation. Defining the statements in the NCA in a separate way would be something that must be overcome and resolved through discussions and negotiations.

In addition to firmly pledging to work towards completion of matters outlined in the NCA, with equality, mutual respect, a new political culture of thorough discussion and negotiation without using force. It was believed that reconciliation, mutual understanding and trust could be established, said the KNU General Secretary.

Next NRPC member Lt-Gen Min Naung, secretary Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Tin, Peace Commission Deputy Chairman U Thein Zaw, Peace

Commission Advisory Group member U Hla Maung Shwe, support group member U Moe Zaw Oo and U Zaw Htay, Director-General from the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor explained about implementation of the NCA for eternal peace in the country, establishing of pre and post 2020 peace process works of NRPC, overcoming difficulties and future works.

Afterwards, KNU General Secretary and representatives explained about establishing a union based on the NCA, deep differences between organizations, setting up of future work processes and work processes of KNU for arriving at sustainable peace.

Later, NRPC members and KNU representatives discussed on establishing sustainable peace and general matters.

In their concluding speeches both the KNU General Sec-

retary and the Union Attorney General spoke of their satisfaction on the progress of the meeting. The Union Attorney General urged all to strive towards holding more informal meetings and regular meetings.

The meeting was attended by NRPC member Lt-Gen Min Naung, secretary Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Tin, Peace Commission Deputy Chairman U Thein Zaw, Peace Commission Advisory Group member U Hla Maung Shwe, support group member U Moe Zaw Oo and Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor Director General U Zaw Htay, KNU General Secretary Pado Saw Tado Moo, joint secretary 2 Pado Saw Hla Tun, permanent central committee member Pado Saw Se Gay and negotiation team members on military matters. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations celebrates 1st Myanmar Traditional Thingyan Festival

WITH the aim to welcome Myanmar New Year; the Traditional Thingyan Festival and to strengthen unity of staffs of the Ministry, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations held its 1st Myanmar Traditional Thingyan celebration on 11 April 2019 at Office No. 1, Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Minister U Thaung Tun, heads of department and staffs from Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations participated in the occasion. —MNA

Tatmadaw troops find food from IDP camps at AA hideout

FOLLOWING the AA group attack on the local police headquarters in MraukU, the security forces carried out security operations in suspected AA hideouts on 9 and 10 April, and found food hidden by the armed group. The food was reportedly collected by the AA from IDP camps in Rakhine State.

The security forces searched an AA camp yesterday afternoon in the forests located north-east of MraukU. They found food from the USAID brand, packs of dried food, including biscuits with the WFP label, dried fish, dried rice,

packs of chilies, packets of rehydration salt, and packets of sugar along with sports dresses and socks.

The clothes and food were provided by donors to IDP camps in Rakhine State. However, there is no IDP camp in MraukU Township. It has been found that the AA group collected the food from IDP camps in Rakhine State through several channels, according to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. —MNA

(Translated by TTN)



The packs of food and clothing hidden by AA group. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chinese Embassy welcomes Thingyan New Year for 2019



People celebrate pre-Thingyan water festival for 2019 Myanmar New Year at Chinese Embassy in Yangon.
PHOTO: MNA

THE Chinese Embassy held a pre-Thingyan water festival for 2019 Myanmar New Year at their embassy grounds on Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road in Dagon Township, Yangon, yesterday.

Firstly, Ambassador Mr. Hong Liang gave a speech saying that the Chinese embassy is hosting this pre-Thingyan festival in the spirit of maintaining the pauk-phaw relationship between Myanmar and China established by previous generations of leaders from both countries. He also added they have invited friends from near and far to carry over

the close bilateral relations.

This was followed by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and Regional Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun delivering separate speeches on the Myanmar New Year and Myanmar-China relations.

Next, Yein dancers performed Thingyan Moe and Mahn Taung YeikKoe and the Chinese Ambassador's wife, Mrs Wan Xue Hong, and embassy families sang 'Let all flowers bloom in peace'.

Afterwards, the Chinese Ambassador and wife, ambas-

sy families and invited guests splashed water on each other to celebrate the pre-Thingyan festival. This is the second time the Chinese embassy has held a pre-Thingyan festival.

During the parliamentary democracy period, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai visited Yangon twice and celebrated Myanmar's traditional Thingyan Festival with Prime Minister U Nu. U Nu also visited Yunnan and celebrated Thingyan with the Chinese Premier and local ethnic residents. — MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Police Chief hands over aid, relief to AA-stricken MraukU security HQ

CHIEF of Myanmar Police Force Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo arrived at No. 31 Security Police Headquarters in MraukU yesterday to respond to the situation there from the AA attack on 9 April.

The Police Chief resupplied the ammunition spent during the defence against AA, consoled families of the injured and fallen security personnel, and handed over support provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Myanmar Police Force.

The Police Chief then visited the injured at the Tatmadaw Hospital, encouraging and consoling them. He later met with the heads of the Security Police Command Division,

State Police Force and District Police Force and other officials where they discussed security affairs, sentry outposts, defensive maneuvers, gather-

ing intel in the area, and maintaining the rule of law, according to Myanmar Police Force. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo provides aids to families of the injured and fallen security personnel. **PHOTO: MNA**

Issuance of the Union Supreme Court: The Performance to improve investment and Doing Business in Myanmar

THE Supreme Court of the Union today issues the legal and judicial reforms to improve Investment and Doing Business in Myanmar.

Legal Performance Law Drafting

- Drafting Arbitration Bill to enact the Arbitration Law (2016 Pyidaungsu Law No.5) to solve the domestic and international commercial disputes
- Drafting and submitting Insolvency Bill to support the national economic development

Issuance of Procedures

- Issuance of the Arbitration Procedures (Notification No. 643/2018) for the Appointment of Arbitrator and Jurisdiction under the Arbitration Law Section 57
- Issuance of Case Management Procedures (Notification No.649/2018) to implement the Case Management System under Section 73 of the Union Judiciary Law

Judicial Performance

- Resolve the cases in a fair, timely and efficient manner in accordance with the law
- Implement the National Case Management Program phased approach since 1 August 2018 and decide the cases within time standards and reduce the postponement rate
- Introduce the Pilot Program of Court-led Mediation in Civil Suits since 1 March 2019 and resolve the cases in timely with the consent of the parties
- Prepare the syllabus for judges training to improve the skill in areas of Intellectual Property Rights and commercial transactions

Doing Business Ranking

- Publish 2018 Annual Report of Yangon High Court including detailed data of Clearance Rate and Time of Disposition for civil suits of the Township Courts in Yangon Region and upload the Report and detailed data on Union Supreme Court Website
- Publish the Union Supreme Court judgments of 2018 rendered in commercial cases and related judgments of the appellate courts and first instance courts
- Use pretrial conference, set time standards and regulate adjournment policy under the Case Management Procedures and develop implementation

The detailed data of Clearance Rate and Time of Disposition for civil suits of the Township Courts in Yangon Region is available as follows:

Myanmar language: <http://www.unionsupremecourt.gov.mm/?q=my/content/13834>

English language: <http://www.unionsupremecourt.gov.mm/?q=content/13873>

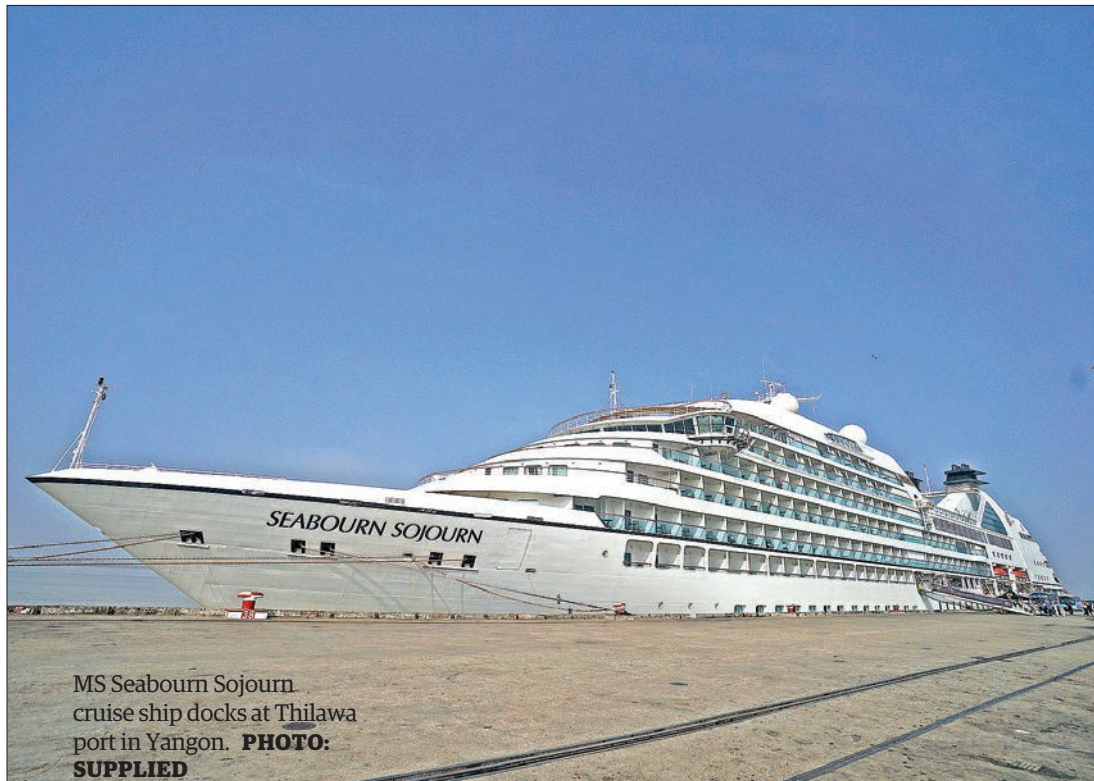
The 2018 judgments of the Supreme Court of the Union rendered in commercial cases and related judgments of the appellate courts and first instance courts are available as follows:

Myanmar language: <http://www.unionsupremecourt.gov.mm/?q=my/content/13867#>

English language: <http://www.unionsupremecourt.gov.mm/?q=content/13872>

The Supreme Court of the Union
Nay Pyi Taw

MS Seabourn Sojourn passenger cruise reached to Myanmar



MS Seabourn Sojourn cruise ship docks at Thilawa port in Yangon. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

MS Seabourn Sojourn passenger cruise reached to Myanmar on 2 April, with arrangement made by Pandaw Cruises Co., Ltd and under the supervision of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

A total of 419 passengers and 330 crews are on board and the ship came from Colombo Port in Sri Lanka and arrived

in Thilawa port, Yangon.

The officials from Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, Immigration Department, Custom Department and Myanmar Port Authority (MPA) greeted the crew and tourists of cruise liner MS Seabourn Sojourn. Authorities have made some arrangement for the tourists to visit around the city.

The tourists, mostly from the US, will visit Bagan, Mandalay for overnight trips and Bago for day return trip while in Myanmar.

The cruise ship left for Phuket port in Thailand on 4 April from Thilawa port, Yangon.—GNLM

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Fish disease diagnostic laboratory, fish education center opened in Bago

A FISH education center and a fish disease diagnostic laboratory were opened last Wednesday at the Bago Region Fisheries Department near Kali village in Bago Township.

Bago Region Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Maung Yin, Bago Region Chief Judge U Maung Maung Shwe, Bago Region Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Kyi Zin, Bago Region Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation U Aung Zaw Naing, Bago Region Minister for Planning and Finance U Nyunt Shwe, Bago Region Fisheries Department Director Sai Kyaw Myint, and U Myo Khaing, the chair of the Bago Region Agriculture, Livestock, Irrigation, and Land Management committee, formally unveiled the signboard of the center by pressing a button and sprinkling it with scented water. The officials then took a tour of the center and the laboratory.

Afterwards, Bago Region Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Maung



Bago Region Fisheries Department in Bago. **PHOTO: TIN SOE**

Yin made the opening remarks and the director of the Bago Region Fisheries Department explained the work the department is conducting. It is hoped that the education center and the laboratory bring about sustainable productivity for consumers, ensure food safety, and help provide capacity building courses and other technological assistance in Bago Region, he said.

The 80x35x23 feet RC building of the fish education center was built during the 2017-2018 fiscal year, with a budget allocation of K137.16 million from the regional government. The fish disease diagnostic laboratory was constructed with K35.6 million allocated from the regional budget.—Tin Soe

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Potato being cultivated on 100 acres of land under GAP system: association

POTATOES are being cultivated on 100 acres of land using Good Agricultural Practices to cater to fried potato businesses in the local market, said U Chan Htway, chairman, Myanmar Potato Association.

The quality of local potatoes is not at par with those imported from other countries, so growers mainly depend on the local market, he said.

“The price of potatoes varies even in the local market. The fried potato businesses earn healthy profits. Therefore, 100 acres of potatoes are currently being cultivated with the use of GAP system, and the yield is likely to be high this year. Potatoes are being cultivated under the GAP system in various townships. At present, local potato products

cannot be exported to foreign markets as they do not meet the quality standards of internal market owing to the high cost of potato production and lack of technology. Furthermore, local potato prices will decline if Chinese potatoes flood the local market,” said U Aung Moe, a potato grower from Shan State.

Therefore, potato growers are planning to buy and cultivate potatoes of Netherlands origin, and target consumers of raw potatoes rather than fried potato businesses.

The prices are currently ranging between K150 and K200 per viss for small-sized potatoes, and K550-K600 per viss for large-sized potatoes in the local market, according to merchants. — GNLM (Translated by La Wonn)

Fifty killed in traffic mishaps on Myawady-Kawkareik Asia Highway in 2018

A TOTAL of 118 traffic accidents, which left 50 people dead and 152 injured, were reported on the Myawady-Kawkareik Asia Highway, according to statistics released by the Kayin State Traffic Police Office.

“Traffic accidents usually occur on the Myawady-Kawkareik Highway because drivers do not obey traffic rules and regulations. The drivers are of the opinion that as long as they know how to drive, it is okay to drive on the road. But when the accidents happen, they are at their wit’s end as to how to overcome the situation. Therefore, we have asked the State Road Transport Administration Department and the Motor Vehicles Supervisory Committee to test the driving skills of those driving cars on the Myawady Road,” said Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nan Khin Htwe Myint.

Most traffic accidents have occurred between mile-

posts 154 and 155, and between mileposts 158 and 159 on the Myawady-Kawkareik Highway.

Therefore, the authorities are planning to extend the road between mileposts 158 and 159 with funds from the Kayin State government’s budget, and the road between mileposts 154 and 155 with funds from the Union budget, in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

According to official statistics, 105 traffic accidents, which left 44 killed and 152 injured, were reported on the road in 2018. As of 8 April, 2019, a total of 13 road accidents on the road have claimed six lives and left 36 people injured.

Reckless driving, over-speeding, defective vehicles, and inclement weather have been identified as the main causes behind the accidents on the Myawady-Kawkareik Asia Highway.— Maung Win

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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Shan Yoma Elephant Camp ready to welcome visitors

THE Shan Yoma Elephant Camp, opened in September, 2018 near Nampantat Village in Kalaw Township, southern Shan State, has said it is prepared to welcome visitors ahead of the Thingyan holidays.

The camp is located about 4 furlongs from the 53/4 mile post on the Meiktila-Taunggyi Pyidaungsu Road near Nampantat Village.

At the camp, visitors can enjoy scenic views of the mountain ranges, waterfalls, and the forest, said officials. The camp is home to four female elephants, two male elephants, and two twin elephants named Khin Moe Oo and Khant Htoo Aung.

Holiday-makers can enjoy elephant rides in the forest, watch and help them bathe, and observe the daily life of the elephants, said



Visitors feeding elephants at Shan Yoma Elephant Camp in Kalaw, Shan State. **PHOTO: KO KO CHIT (KALAW)**

officials. Visitors can also book an accommodation and bathe in the waterfall and the small lakes in the area, they added.

Local visitors are charged K1,000 for entrance and K3,000 for an elephant ride. Tourists have to shell out K20,000 for entrance as

well as elephant rides.

Officials at the camp for recreation are trying to provide more facilities and services to increase

the number of visitors coming to the elephant camp. — Ko Ko Chit (Kalaw)

(Translated by La Wonn)

Ayeyawady dolphin is in peril: conservationists

The highest number of dolphin deaths were recorded in the Ayeyawady dolphin conservation area in 2018, according to an announcement from the Wildlife Conservation Society (Myanmar).

In 2018, six dolphins were found dead in the Ayeyawady River, and one dolphin death has been recorded so far in 2019. Most of the Ayeyawady dolphins perished because of human activity, according to the WCS. Illegal battery-shock fishing was the most common cause for the deaths, it added.

A survey conducted jointly by the Fisheries Department and WCS (Myanmar) this year puts the total number of dolphins in the area between Mandalay and Bhamo townships at 72.

The survey of the Ayeyawady dolphins is usually conducted between Mandalay and Bhamo townships in February



The carcass of an Ayeyawady dolphin is found in the Ayeyawady River. **PHOTO: MYO WIN TUN (MONYWA)**

every year. The 2019 survey was conducted by officials from the fisheries departments of Mandalay and Sagaing regions as well as Kachin State, the Environment and Rare Extinct Aquatic Species Conservation Department, the Myanmar Fisheries Federation, fishermen, and WCS (Myanmar).

In 2018, a total of 76 Ay-

eyawady dolphins were recorded along the Ayeyawady River. Of them, 26 dolphins were found between Mandalay and Kyaukmyaung townships, 37 dolphins between Malae and Shwegu townships, and 13 dolphins in the conservation area near Bhamo Town. — Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

MFF calls for inclusion of breeders' rights in Fish Farming Law

By Aye Yamone

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation has said it will ask the Amyotha and Pyithu Hluttaws to include the rights of fish breeders in the new Fish Farming Law, and expand the scope of the draft law to cover the food sector, the pharmaceutical and laboratory sectors, and fish breeding technology.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, through an announcement on state-owned media on 23 March, has invited suggestions from fish and prawn breeding entrepreneurs for amendments to the draft Fish Farming Law.

"The law does not include the rights of fish farmers. Therefore, we want to include the definition of fish breeders and their rights in the Fish Farming Law. The law will have two aspects — government management and instructions and, the rights of fish farmers. We are going to suggest the addition of some sectors in the law," said U Win Kyaing, general secretary, MFF.

"We are going to suggest renaming the Fish Farming Law into the National Fish Breeding Development Law. We will also request the for-

mation of a central committee which will formulate policies and processes for the development of fish and prawn breeding," he said.

The current law was drawn up by the Fisheries Department, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, during the previous government's rule.

"The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw has announced the draft of the Fish Farming Law. The existing law is also called the Fish Farming Law. We used to say that our country is rich in water resources and land resources. We also have fair weather conditions. When we draw the new fish breeding law, we will request changing the name of the law. We will submit this matter before the Hluttaws after the water festival," said U Win Kyaing.

According to the MFF, the import and export of fish feed also needs to be covered in the draft law, along with disease control and prevention, as well as breeding technology. The MFF has said it will give suggestions regarding all these matters after holding discussions with fish breeding experts, veterinary doctors, and jurists. (Translated by Hay Mar)

Over 100,000 workers in Thailand return to Myanmar during Thingyan holidays

OVER 100,000 workers return from Thailand to their hometowns over 6 days to participate in Thingyan festival according to the Immigration Department.

Two governments granted free visa services from 5 April to 30 April for the Myanmar workers and there are over 100,000 Myanmar workers entered Myanmar so far.

"Those migrants workers

go back home to enjoy Thingyan festival at their hometowns. Previously, Myanmar government collected 20 Baht from the workers but now they all are granted free re-entry not to delay," the official from the Immigration Department said.

The authorities have arranged health care, money changing activity and other

necessary matters for workers.

Myanmar Labour Attache' Office warned the workers who return to their hometowns have to bring their documents with them. They need to copy or take photo their documents in case they lose them, in order to apply for it again before they lost. — Htain Lin Aung

(Translated by La Wonn)

Unity in diversity is our strength for building a democratic federal Union

THESE are over 130 ethnic tribes in Myanmar, and each tribe has its own traditional culture and customs. Every ethnic tribe celebrates its own traditional festival, praying for good weather, a good harvest, protection from disease, and peace in the country.

The festivals reflect the peace-loving spirit of our ethnic people.

Our country has witnessed armed conflicts for nearly 70 years.

If we look back at our country's history, soon after the 20th Century Panglong Agreement and our Independence, we succumbed to the fires of internal conflict.

For nearly seven decades, peace, stability, and development fell victim to conflict. Over successive generations, our people have seen their socio-economic situation and morale undermined, while our country's future has been gradually corroded.

Now is the time to show that we are in the same boat and moving towards the same goal, and to prove that we are committed to sticking together in the good times and the bad.

Till today, Myanmar has not been able to escape from the trap of poverty and conflict, and great effort will be needed if we are to catch up with the rest of the world. Our people have been waiting for almost seventy years hoping for a better future envisioned by the Panglong Conference.

The ethnic armed groups in the different regions have an obligation to contribute to peace and stability, and the development of the economy.

Now is the time to show that we are in the same boat and moving towards the same goal, and to prove that we are committed to sticking together in the good times and the bad.

Unity is our main strength, and we must show our unity in diversity to the world.

The Union Government has supported the traditional festivals of the ethnic minorities across the country, paving the way for all our ethnic brethren to meet each other and strengthen the friendship among them. All ethnic people must not hesitate to make use of such opportunities.

All the ethnic minorities residing in the country have a duty to preserve their dialect, literature, culture, art, and customs, while the State Constitution also guarantees equal rights to them in terms of conservation of dialects, art, literature, culture, customs, beliefs, and education, medical care, job opportunities, and businesses.

Every change requires a certain extent of time to produce fruit. Hence, we must all join our hands firmly, without casting doubts on each other, and with decisive commitment and unity as we walk on the path to a democratic federal Union.

Ministry of Ethnic Affairs: Working on granting equal rights to ethnic peoples

"The Ministry of Ethnic Affairs is working with other ministries to unify all nationalities, nurture the Union spirit and instil a sense of togetherness, provide them with greater knowledge, and encourage their high literacy rate."

Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin

By Nandar Win
Photos by Aye Than

ENVELOPED in unity and unison, the Panglong Agreement was successfully signed and reached in Panglong, Southern Shan State, among Bogyoke Aung San and ethnic national leaders 72 years ago.

As the commitments of the agreement failed to realize, mistrust and doubts brew among the brethren across the nation, resulting armed conflicts, and that peace and joy in the country is faded away in oblivion.

Chewing up all the bitterness and drawing sad lessons in the chronicle of the country for 72 years, the ethnic nationalities are yearning and wanted to implement the union dream conceived in Panglong. The Ethnic Rights Protection Law was enacted in 2015 and the tasks are ongoing for the equal rights of the ethnic nationalities. Thus, the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs was formed on 30 March 2016.

With regards to the tasks of the ministry, Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin said that the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs is working in co-operation with other ministries in garnering the unity of the nationalities, nurturing union spirit and sense of togetherness, providing them with greater knowledge, en-

couraging them for their growth of high literacy rate.

Meanwhile, political discussions on Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong are held for achieving internal peace and for building democratic federal union with the strength of the nationalities.

The ethnic nationalities have high expectations for building a democratic federal union with equal development approach.

Under the guidance of the incumbent government, the emerging new ministry is working with five missions in its implementation.

Deputy Minister U Hla Maw Oo explained the missions as follows.

1. To promote solidarity, mutual amity and respect, reciprocal assistance as such Union spirit among ethnic groups;
2. To fully obtain the rights prescribed in the Ethnic Rights Protection Law;
3. To preserve and develop language, literature, history, fine art, culture heritages and customs;
4. To create favorable environment for preserving the ethnic groups' original characteristics;
5. To promote socioeconomic development including education, health, economy, transportation and communi-

cation in ethnic groups areas.

In all 14 states and regions, Offices of Directors have been commissioned and are functioning.

The Deputy Minister explained that six offices for state and region level have been already in operation and that more offices are on the arrangement for opening soon.

The state and region offices are opened in Kayin, Kayah, Mon states and Bago, Ayeyawaddy and Yangon regions and functioning well.



President U Win Myint meets students of the University for the Development of the National Races of the Union.

The officers and staff members are recruited from the locality in the areas and assigned at the offices of the Directors at the state and region levels, and that vital matters are submitted to the Union Government.

The Union Minister said that the local produce of the ethnic nationalities have been hooked up with the developed market in developed areas, and for the continued development, the business associations are being formed through the forums.

As a result, it was one of the myriad interesting scenes at the Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival in Yangon, which gathered people from the 135 ethnic groups in the country to showcase their products, cultures and traditions.

To encourage ethnic entrepreneurs and sustainable development in their regions, the Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association (MEEA) was formed on 17 March 2018.

During the "Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival" in Yangon positive road map for prosperity has been laid down despite the challenges being encountered.

Emeritus Professor Dr. U Aung Htun Thet of the ethnic association said that there are conflicts since regaining independence in 1948 connected with the ethnic nationalities, and that the ministry is trying its best for the getting peace and in trust

building among the ethnic nationalities.

It is linking up with the economic development and the peace. The association is being formed not with the purpose for doing business, but to encourage and to support the ethnic nationalities to engage in functional business.

He said that all the colorful attires and personal accessories of (135) ethnic nationalities of Myanmar have fine attractions in exporting and selling into the



Children's storybooks printed in ethnic languages.

international markets. They are much similar to the tradition and culture of (10) nations ASEAN countries and that commercial exchange could be possible if tried. The nationalities are in need of relevant laws and that we have to welcome the laws

that protect and take care of the ethnic nationalities.

At the "Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival" held at Kyaik-kasan ground from 25 to 30 January 2018, "Miss Ethnic Myanmar 2019" pageant had been staged with a view to select and entrusted as goodwill Ambassador for Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association (MEEA).

Manau Dance of Kachin nationality has been staged at the festival, and that all nationalities participated in the show, reflecting the unity and strength of the nationalities. In the upcoming years, dances of other nationalities would be dramatized.

The Deputy Minister is of the view that the unity of the ethnic nationalities is very much vital for peace implementation in the country.

The "Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival" has been organized to help understand the diverse cultures and traditions of the nationalities; to help and assist the desired peace; to show the beauty of the nationalities to the people including the foreigners; to enhance the tourism industry; to introduce the local produce; and to find job opportunities for the youth.

Joint General Secretary Minn Banyar Sann said that we



The 71st Anniversary of Chin National Day held in Kantar village.

1. To promote solidarity, mutual amity and respect, mutual assistance as such Union spirit among ethnic groups;
2. To fully obtain the rights prescribed in the Ethnic Rights Protection Laws;
3. To preserve and develop language, literature, history, fine art, culture heritages and customs;
4. To create flexible environment for preserving the ethnic groups original characteristics;
5. To promote socioeconomic development including education; health, economy, transportation and communication in ethnic groups areas.

The State Counsellor attended the 70th anniversary of Pa-O National Day held in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Deputy Minister U Hla Maw Oo said that he and the union minister usually graced the memorial days being held in Nay Pyi Taw, and that only when they were tied up with other commitment they assigned director-generals to attend the functions.

The Nay Pyi Taw excursion trip was organized by inviting ethnic nationalities from Rakhine State, Shan State (North), Bago Region, and that lessons were imparted that the development of other states and regions similar to Nay Pyi Taw is to get the peace in the nation.

In addition to peace, the vast knowledge, and the four cardinal virtues are required for development and peace.

In February and in March 2019, the excursion trips were organized for ethnic nationalities from many states and regions to Nay Pyi Taw and also staged a meeting for the exchange of views.

Moreover an exchange of view was conducted with the students from Mandalay Social Science Institute (MSSI).

In line with the second objective, the arrangement is being made to ensure in fulfilling the rights in accordance with the laws without any discrimination in full guarantee to have the rights mentioned in the State Constitution.

Deputy Minister U Hla Maw Oo said that it is necessary in drafting carefully for new by-laws to ensure access and equality, and that the draft for Strategy on Nationalities Rights is in the process.

Pyaungsu Hluttaw Law No 8/2015 has enacted Law Protecting Ethnic Rights has been enacted.

The by-law to protect the right of the ethnic minorities would be approved as it has been going on in cooperation, said Minister for the Karen Ethnic Affairs of the Mon State Government on 2 February 2019. The draft has been forwarded to the Union Attorney General Office.

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Union Ethnic Affairs Minister Nai Thet Lwin inspects an assortment of traditional ethnic items.

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Hpa-an tourist spots crowded with visitors

WITH the Thingyan New Year festival approaching, the number of visitors to Hpa-an is on the rise.

Officials are making arrangements for accommodation for visitors and food donations during the Thingyan festival.

"Normally, there are over 2,000 local visitors and 50 tourists a day. Sometimes, two or three buses with groups of tourists on board come for a visit, and most of the tourists are from Germany," said Sayadaw U Dhammaparla, an abbot residing at the Kawgun Cave pagoda.

"The monasteries have prepared for providing accommodation to visitors and for vegetarian food donations during the Thingyan festival," he said,



Pilgrims make a visit to the Kaw Ka Thaung Cave in Kayin State.

PHOTO : MIN THU (HPA-AN)

Hpa-an, the capital of Kayin State, is surrounded by natural caves, historical pagodas, waterfalls, and other recreational sites.

State, is surrounded by natural caves, historical pagodas, waterfalls, and other recreational sites.

Local pilgrims and tourists mostly visit Hpa-an Township, which is always crowded with visitors.

The caves in Hpa-an are a major draw for visitors. Among the natural caves in Kayin State, the most famous are the Bayint Nyi cave, Sadan cave, Kawgun cave, Yathaypuan cave, Kaw Ka Thaung cave, and Eaintsa Thaya cave.

Local and foreign visitors are keen to observe Kayin traditional businesses, traditions, culture, customs, and livelihoods.

Handmade silk soap, a popular product from Hpa-an township, is a tourist favorite. — Min Thu (Hpa-an)

(Translated by La Wonn)

Offshore, inshore fishing vessels to be banned during closed season

By Aye Yamone

THE authorities will ban offshore and inshore fishing vessels in the coming closed season, but traditional inshore fishing will be permitted as usual, said U Hla Htay, the Deputy Director of Yangon Region's Fisheries Department.

Fishing will be banned for 60 or 90 days in the fishing areas during the closed season. Entrepreneurs had suggested designating zero per cent fishing boats during the closed season at the livestock and fishery sector entrepreneurs' regular meeting, which was held at the Myanmar Fisheries Federation on 9 April.

"Previously, the department had banned fishing vessels for three months from June to August, with zero per cent fishing boats. But this time, they are not sure as to when they need to shut down or for how many months they need to shut down. Then, they will also ban inshore fishing boats. But, for the moment, they plan to permit traditional inshore fishing," said U Hla Htay.

"Traditional inshore fishing supports daily livelihoods. However, those engaged in illegal fishing will have legal action taken against them. The department has already submitted the matter to the Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and asked

him to impose a fishing ban of 60 or 90 days in the no-fishing season and in fishing areas," he said.

"The Yangon, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi regions, Mon and Rakhine states have agreed to ban fishing during the closed season. But, they have requested the duration of the ban be reduced to 60 days instead of 90 days. They have requested the ban be imposed for 45 days in Rakhine State and Ayeyawady Region, 60 days in Mon State and Taninthayi Region, and 50 flexible days in Yangon Region," according to the Myanmar Sea Fishing Entrepreneurs Association.

"They have already submitted request letters to the Minister. I understand that nobody has told the minister the details. This is very important for us. But I heard that the ministry will make its decision in June. We don't have any plan. So, we can do nothing to help fishermen to earn an income during the no-fishing season," said Daw Toe Nandar Tin, the vice chairperson of the Myanmar Fisheries Federation.

Since 2013, the Fisheries Department, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, has been declaring an annual 'no-fishing season' of three months, with a suitable

percentage of vessels allowed to continue fishing.

Last year, the Fisheries Department designated the period between 16 May and 15 August as the closed season. Earlier, fishing was totally restricted during the closed season. However, the Fisheries Department has relaxed this rule, allowing 20 per cent of fishing vessels to operate during the season.

There are many offshore and inshore fishing enterprises in Yangon and Taninthayi regions and Mon State. Currently, there are over 3,000 offshore fishing vessels in Myanmar.

(Translated by Hay Mar)Workers carry fish from inshore boats in Kyeintali, Gwa Township. **FILE PHOTO: WCS MARINE**

CMP garment exports fetch nearly \$2 bln in Oct-March



Textile workers sewing on production line at a garment factory in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAAR

THE exports of garments made under the CMP (cut, make, and pack) system touched nearly US\$2 billion between 1 October, 2018 and 1 March, 2019, an increase of \$880 million compared with the same period in the previous fiscal, according to the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in CMP garments and textiles, which contribute to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

The garment sector is one of the prioritized sectors that drives exports. The CMP garment industry has emerged as a very promising one, enjoying preferential trade with west-

ern countries. The majority of Myanmar's garment factories operate under the CMP system, and those engaged in the industry are striving to transform CMP into a free on board (FoB) system, according to the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association.

The value of CMP garment exports was only \$850 million in the 2015-2016 Financial Year. Over the next two FYs, CMP exports tripled in value. In the 2016-2017FY, CMP exports fetched about \$2 billion. The earnings increased to around \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY. In the last six-month mini-budget (April-September 2018), CMP

exports were valued at \$2.2 billion, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar primarily exports CMP garments to Japan and European markets. It also ships CMP garments to markets in the Republic of Korea, China, and the US. Due to growing demand from foreign trade partners, imports of CMP raw materials are rising year by year.

There are over 400 garment factories in Myanmar. Myanmar's inexpensive labour attracts investments from foreign manufacturers into the country. — Ko Khant
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Magway Region to cultivate black sesame on 50,000 acres of land using GAP

A TOTAL of 50,000 acres of land will be brought under black sesame cultivation in the coming monsoon in 25 townships in Magway Region, according to the region's Agriculture Department. The black sesame will be grown using Good Agricultural Practices, it added.

With the move, the Magway Region's Agriculture Department is aiming to meet the ASEAN criteria for GAP Export markets prefer sesame cultivated under GAP, and offer a good price for it.

In 2017, growers from 50 villages of Magway, Minbu, Min-

hla, and Natmauk townships used GAP to grow sesame on over 3,000 acres of land. In spite of torrential rain destroying some farms, more than 70 tons of black sesame seeds were shipped to Japan, according to an exporter.

According to data from the Agriculture Department, black sesame was cultivated, using GAP, on 22,000 acres of land in Magway Region in 2018.

A growth in sesame seeds acreage combined with good agricultural practices helped increase exports.

Japan prefers to buy black

sesame seeds cultivated with GAP from Myanmar, and it purchases them after a quality assessment. Meanwhile, China buys various colored sesame seeds from Myanmar.

Sesame is cultivated throughout the year. Magway Region, which has gained a reputation as the oil pot of Myanmar, is the main producer of sesame seeds. Besides Magway, sesame is also cultivated in Mandalay and Sagaing regions. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Over 4,400 low cost, affordable apartments to be sold in 2018-2019FY

THE Ministry of Construction plans to sell over 4,400 low cost and affordable apartments in Yangon Region in the 2018-2019 Financial Year, said U Kyaw Lin, the Deputy Minister for Construction.

"In the 2018-2019FY, 4,452 low cost and affordable apartment building units, constructed by the Ministry of Construction, will be sold," he said.

The Ministry of Construction began to implement the housing project on 1 August, 2016, with the aim of enabling the needy to own apartments with the help of home loans.

Over 25,000 people have saved over K23 billion through the purchase of low cost and affordable apartments, as of 31 January, 2019, according to the Ministry.

The Ministry has granted K35.17 billion in loans to 2,720 people for buying low cost and affordable apartments. The Construction, Housing and Infrastructure Development Bank (CHID Bank) has increasingly set goals and targets for the development of the construction sector.

Under JICA's ODA loan program, some low cost apartments in Yangon Region will be sold through a long-term housing loan with a low interest rate. Those wishing to purchase the low cost units had registered themselves with the Urban and Housing Development Depart-

ment in mid-February.

The apartments covered by the low-cost housing project, implemented by the Urban and Housing Development Department under the Ministry of Construction, will be sold in Yuzana Housing Phase 1 and 2, Kanaung Housing in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan), and Shwelinban Housing Phase 2 and 3, and affordable housing units will be sold in the Htee Hlaing Shin Housing project in Hlinethaya Township.

The low cost homes that will be sold include four-storey eight-unit apartment buildings in Shwelinban Housing Phase-2 and four-storey six-unit apartment buildings in Shwelinban Housing Phase-3 in Hlinethaya Township.

Four-storey eight-unit apartment buildings and four-storey six-unit apartment buildings in Yuzana Housing Phase-1, four-storey eight-unit apartment buildings and four-storey six-unit apartment buildings in Yuzana Housing Phase-2, and four-storey eight-unit and four-storey six-unit apartment buildings in Kanaung Housing in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) will also be put up for sale.

The affordable housing project includes five-storey four-unit apartment buildings in Htee Hlaing Shin Housing Estate in Hlinethaya Township.—GNLM

(Translated by Hay Mar)



The Low-cost housing is under construction in Dagon Seikkan Township. PHOTO- NYI ZAW MOE

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Ministry of Ethnic Affairs: Working on granting equal rights to ethnic peoples

FROM PAGE-8+9

Awareness raising talks have been earmarked to deliver for (61) events in 2018-2019, and that 29 talks have been already realized.

In accordance with the responses from the ethnic nationalities, "The Strategic Plan (Draft) for the Rights of the Ethnic Nationalities in Myanmar" is to be reviewed through the workshops and seminars.

The plan period is for 10 years from 2019 to 2028 in the form of master strategy, and then year by year plan is to be drawn in details through priority, said Dr. L Tu Meang Gaung, Director General of the Department of Ethnic Rights.

The priority sectors have been selected in the 2019-2028 Strategic Plan and that various themes are included such as that of rights and responsibilities; that of socio-economic developments; that of identifying correct tribes and clans; that of protection of women against violence; that of gender equality; that of protection from human trafficking; that of preserving culture and tradition; that of preserving the near extinct tribes; that of prevention from drug addiction; that of advance discussions of regional development issues with the participation of local people; that of preserving herbal plants; that of addressing issues; and that of reviewing over conflicts.

The implementation of third aim and objective included that of ethnic nationalities; languages; literature; history; arts; culture; preservation of national heritages; traditional dances; and etc.

During January 2019, the capacity building training and course on preservation of intangible culture and heritage has been conducted in cooperation



A pre-commemoration for Pa-O National Day held in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

with Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.

During February 2019, the Workshop on Preservation and Protection of Cultural in Myanmar was conducted with the co-operation of Geneva Call Organization that elevated the capacity of the staff members.

In the context of ethnic nationalities in Myanmar, there are tangle cultural heritage (TCH) and intangible cultural heritage (ICH). There are 135 ethnic nationalities in Myanmar and have abundant and profuse own intangible cultural heritage. The ministry has planned to collect these heritages into data and would submit to the State.

With a view to impart knowledge on that subject, a knowledge sharing course was conducted in Nay Pyi Taw for the staff members and officers of the ministry, with the objective to disseminate information to the posterity and upcoming generation, said Museum professional and expert Dr. Nu Mya Zan.

During 2018-2019, the plan is underway to print over 750,000 copies of ethnic nationalities' stories, legends and fables in booklets with illustration in 66 languages for pre-primary school students for their educational de-

velopment.

Deputy Director-General U Win Naing of the Department of Ethnical Literature and Culture said the task is being carried out with the view to exchanging literature and culture among the nationalities in fostering unity, and on the other hand, it encourages and helpful for the emergence of peace and democracy federal union.

The printing of 66 categories of books are to be implemented through open tender system and that the books are to be distributed to the cultural teams. Many books on ethnic nationalities are in the process of printing for the greater good of the nationalities.

The fourth mission and objective is for preserving the ethnic groups' original characters and its environment including ethnic languages, literature, culture, tradition, historical heritages, and that the tasks are being implemented through workshops and training courses.

The relevant assignments and tasks including the protection of intangible cultural heritages have been maintained through pragmatic approach. Moreover, a documentary film on "Hta Nawt" ethnic tribe residing at Taungbo Hla Village in Kalaw Township

have been successfully conducted, said Deputy Director-General U Win Naing.

The fifth mission and aim is to promote socioeconomic development including education, health, economy, transportation and communication in ethnic groups' areas. The plans have been carried out in cooperation and coordination with other ministries, non-governmental organizations. During 2017-2018, total of 5181 teaching assistants have been recruited in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Moreover, language teachers would be appointed for the benefits of the nationalities.

The educational booklets, posters and handouts on healthcare published from the UNICEF have been translated into ethnic languages and distributed.

The Ministry of Health and Sports of Myanmar and the UNICEF have published a standardized and ideal book on healthcare information in Myanmar language, and that the book under referral is to be translated into 55 ethnic languages for the nationalities.

During 2018-2019 fiscal year, 30 villages in Yangon Region and Ayeyawady Region have been provided with solar power electricity generating system in cooperation with other ministries for all round development.

A Chinese delegation headed by Vice Minister Mr. Li Changping, State Ethnic Affairs Commission of the People's Republic of China visited Myanmar in November 2018 and discussed with union minister, Hluttaw members and other officials on bilateral matters on development issues of the nationalities. The Chinese side candidly suggested some ethnic nationalities to come forward to the peace talks without resolving with arms. An MoU was signed for the further development of ethnic nationalities of two countries.

A Chinese delegation led

by Mr. Li Faun, Chairman of the Myanmar-China Economic Cooperation Development Promotion Association, called on Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin at the latter's office in Nay Pyi Taw in February 2019. At the meeting, they cordially and openly discussed and exchanged views on matters related to peace and stability at the border areas of China and Myanmar and the socio economic development of local ethnic people there, cooperation between the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs and the State Ethnic Affairs Commission of China, conducting China-Myanmar ethnics festivals likes Yangon's ethnics culture festival in a bid to develop ethnic areas-based tourism sector and stepping up efforts for bilateral cooperation in ethnic affairs.

In the development plans of the ministry, many tasks are underway such as that of the construction of new buildings; that of providing job opportunities for the ethnic nationalities; that of capacity buildings of the staff members and officers; that of celebrating traditional festivals on significant days; that of displaying attires and accessories of ethnic nationalities.

As the armed conflicts are still going on in the country since regaining independence in 1948, efforts are to be exerted by all means including discussions through Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong to get a solution for peace.

Dr. L Tu Meang Gaung said that as our country mainly needs peace and therefore we have to reduce the sentiments and displeasure of disparity among the ethnic nationalities. With a view to implementing a democracy federal union successfully, our department would earnestly take part in the endeavor.

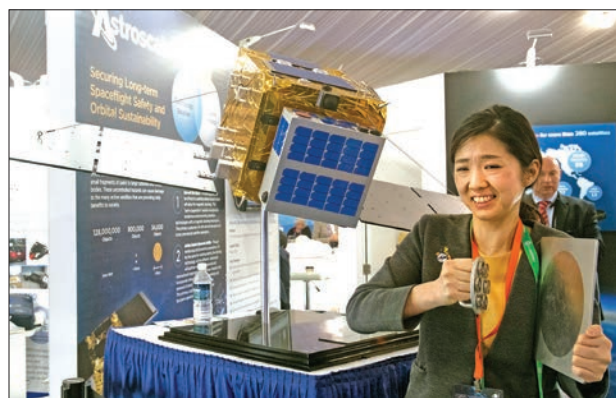
Panglong Spirit means a specific courage of the brethren with equality and justice in the construction for the peace and nation building, and that we are on our way to have the Panglong Spirit among us.

In conclusion, the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs is working to the best of its capacities for the greater good and advantages of the ethnic nationalities through cooperation and coordination with other departments, UN agencies, development partners, social associations, civil societies, and that stepping ahead straight forward in that right direction.

Translated by UMT (Ahlon)



Kayin nationals gather for the harvest festival in Taungsu Village, Einme Township, on 7 January.



Japanese entrepreneur Nobu Okada founded Astroscale in 2013 with the sole aim of launching 'space sweepers'. **PHOTO: AFP**

Ridding space of old satellites and debris

COLORADO SPRINGS (United States) — With constellations of thousands of telecommunication mini satellites expected to orbit Earth in the near future, the risk of space-debris collisions will grow. For Nobu Okada, it's an opportunity.

The 46-year-old Japanese entrepreneur founded the start-up Astroscale in Singapore in 2013 with the sole aim of launching "space sweepers." The company — now based in Tokyo — has 71 employees.

A demonstration will take place in 2020 when an Astroscale satellite will capture one of the company's own mini satellites and try and nudge it out of its orbit — with the goal of pushing it into the atmosphere to burn up.

The Europeans and Americans are developing similar concepts, but the idea of tidying up in space remains an experimental one.

AFP caught up with Nobu Okada at the 35th Space Symposium — a large meeting of the space industry in the US state of Colorado.

Is there a market for taking down space debris?

"One guy told me, Nobu, there's no market, nobody pays money to remove space debris. And when I heard there's no market, I feel this (is) a good news. If there's no market. There's no competition."

"The density of space debris has reached the critical level where chain collisions can happen at any time in the near future.

So, if we do not take any actions, space is not sustainable anymore."

"So, somebody has to clean up the space."

Who is going to pay?

"The future debris will mostly come from constellations. A certain percentage of the satellites will go defunct in space. And they have to be replenished with new satellites to keep the coverage. To do that, they have to remove the oldest satellites to make sure their orbital plane is clean.

"The other business line is that we also have to clean up the debris which are already up there. And these are mostly littered by the governments. We should prioritize which debris are the most critical and have to be removed with high priority, with government money, like rocket upper stages." "Two years ago, they were just listening, but now they are beginning to take responsibility."—AFP ■

Historic water levels at Iraq reservoirs and dams: officials

SAMARRA (Iraq) — Waterlevels in Iraq's reservoirs and dams have reached historic heights, officials have told AFP, with thousands of families facing possible displacement by more flooding.

Weeks of rain compounded by melting snowcaps in neighbouring Turkey and Iran have almost filled Iraq's four main reservoirs and swelled the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

In Samarra, north of Baghdad, water is being diverted into the natural reservoir at Tharthar Lake in amounts unseen in decades, said dam chief Kareem Hassan.

"Today, the Tharthar barrage is seeing the highest levels of water passing through in its history," Hassan told AFP.

"We haven't seen such levels pass through the structure since it was founded in 1956, so 63 years."

The Dukan dam in the northeast also "had not witnessed waterlevels this high since 1988," said manager Hama Taher, calling on people living nearby to leave.

Authorities have said the excess will be stored in reservoirs ahead of expected droughts during blistering summer months, and have pre-emptively restricted farmers from planting crops that need high amounts of water.

The water arriving at



Weeks of rain compounded by melting snowcaps in neighbouring Turkey and Iran have led to historic water levels. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tharthar is gushing south from Iraq's largest reservoir in Mosul, currently holding nine billion cubic meters of water — some two billion short of capacity, the water ministry has said.

The high levels have put two bridges linking the banks of Mosul under water, leaving truck drivers stranded with goods on either side.

"We have officially told kiosk owners and residents to get away from the banks," said Hussem al-Sumaidai, who heads civil defence operations in the broader Nineveh province.

Aid delivered by boat

Waterlevels in Mosul were also blamed by some for last month's ferry

drowning that killed more than 100 people.

Further south, villages and surrounding fields have been flooded, sending farmers into a frenzy.

More than 8,000 hectares of agriculture have been flooded in the small village of Huweidi in Basra province alone, according to its mayor Mohammad Nasseh.

Hundreds of families were displaced in the southern province of Misan, with another 2,000 possibly forced to flee soon, the United Nations has said.

The UN has had to deliver humanitarian aid by boat in some areas due to flooding, it said on Wednesday.

Despite reassurances by the Iraqi govern-

ment, the high levels have sparked concern among observers including environmental scientist Azzam Alwash.

The Mosul dam was built atop a bedrock of gypsum, a mineral that dissolves in water. That foundation requires regular cement injections to prevent cracks in the gypsum from expanding.

"If the bedrock settles as a result of cavities, that settlement will translate into damage to the core of the dam which cannot be undone and can possibly lead to catastrophic consequences," Alwash told AFP on Thursday.

"If the dam fails when it's full, the area will be under five metres of water," he said. —AFP ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC KYOTO VOY. NO. (914S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC KYOTO VOY. NO. (914S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-04-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P 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 MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (14/2019)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	DMP/L-200(18-19)	Hydraulic Oil Light(H.O.L) (800) Drums	Ks
(b)	DMP/L-201(18-19)	Chrome Lignite (XP-20) (200) MT	Ks
(c)	DMP/L-202(18-19)	Spares For NAT-55 Drawwork (2) Groups	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available free download at the Ministry of Electricity and Energy Website Portal (www.moe.gov.mm) as from 11 April 2019. Tender forms will not be sold.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **14:00 pm on 13 May 2019**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time – **13-5-2019, 14:00 pm**

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 – 411206

Netanyahu looks to form right-wing government after victory

JERUSALEM—Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sought to form a right-wing governing coalition on Thursday after securing victory in a high-stakes Israeli election despite a strong challenge from a centrist alliance.

The results from Tuesday's vote came despite corruption allegations against the 69-year-old premier and kept him on course to become Israel's longest-serving prime minister later this year.

The allegations are likely to play an important role in coalition negotiations as many analysts expect Netanyahu to demand pledges from potential partners to agree to remain in his government if he is indicted.

Netanyahu will rely in part on politicians of the nationalist right opposed to a Palestinian state to put together his government. His current government is already seen as the most right-wing in Israel's history, and his next is expected to be similar if not even further to the right. Netanyahu himself, in a campaign pledge just three days before polling day, pledged to begin annexing settlements in the occupied West Bank.

Applying sovereignty in the West Bank on a large scale could effectively end remaining hopes for a two-state solution with the Palestinians.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. PHOTO: AFP

Netanyahu's pledge was widely seen as an appeal to the far right, and it appears to have worked: he boosted the number of parliamentary seats for his Likud, while smaller, far-right parties struggled. The Likud said late on Wednesday that Netanyahu "will form a right-wing government and he is already in advanced negotiations with the national camp partners."

'Advanced negotiations'

Throughout the campaign, Netanyahu highlighted his bond with US President Donald Trump, who has swung US policy sharp-

ly in Israel's favour and openly backed the prime minister.

On Wednesday, Trump said the incumbent's election to a fifth term gives the White House's long-awaited peace plan, expected to be released in the coming weeks, a "better chance".

It was not clear what he meant. He also tweeted a picture of a Netanyahu supporter waving a Trump flag and telephoned the premier to offer congratulations.

The election was seen as a referendum on the veteran prime minister, who has built a reputation as guarantor of Israel's security and economic growth,

but whose divisive right-wing populism and alleged corruption led to calls for change.

The results reflected his deft political skills, Israel's shift to the right and wide satisfaction with Netanyahu's achievements, but also the fact that many voters are fed up with him.

The new centrist Blue and White alliance put together by ex-military chief Benny Gantz will finish with a similar number of seats to the Likud even though it came together less than two months before the polls.

Gantz's alliance, which conceded defeat on Wednesday night, however could not peel away enough right-wing votes to unseat Netanyahu.

The results showed that the Likud together with other right-wing parties allied to the prime minister would hold around 65 seats in the 120-seat parliament.

Final official results are expected to be announced by Friday.

They leave President Reuven Rivlin, who must ask one of the candidates to form a government, with little choice but to pick Netanyahu. Intensive coalition negotiations could drag on for days or even weeks.

Rivlin said he would begin consultations with party leaders next week ahead of making his decision. His office said the con-

sultations would be broadcast live in their entirety for the first time.

'Make life bitter'

Gantz, a 59-year-old former paratrooper, mounted a strong challenge by brandishing his security credentials while pledging to undo damage he says Netanyahu has inflicted on the country with divisive politics.

"We respect the decision of the people," Gantz said Wednesday night. Former finance minister Yair Lapid, who co-led Blue and White, vowed to "make life bitter for the Netanyahu government". The close race between the two main parties had led to uncertainty after polls closed Tuesday night and exit surveys were released.

Both Netanyahu and Gantz claimed victory after the initial exit polls, though even then it appeared Netanyahu was best placed to form a coalition.

Speaking in the early hours of Wednesday at the Likud's post-election party in Tel Aviv, Netanyahu called it a "magnificent victory." The vote had been expected to be close as Netanyahu faced potential corruption charges. Fighting for his political life, he spent the weeks ahead of the vote campaigning furiously to energise his right-wing base. —AFP ■

Jubilant Sudanese shout 'regime has fallen' as they wait on army

KHARTOUM (Sudan)— Huge crowds of jubilant Sudanese thronged squares across the centre of Khartoum on Thursday as the army promised an "important announcement" after months of protests demanding the ouster of President Omar al-Bashir.

Thousands more chanted "the regime has fallen," as they poured into the open ground outside army headquarters where defiant protesters have braved tear gas to keep up an unprecedented sit-in now in its sixth day.

There was still no sign of the army's promised announcement by afternoon but state media announced that the security agency was freeing all political prisoners in the meantime. "The Sudanese army will issue an important statement soon. Wait for it," the state television anchor said, without elaborating as martial music

replaced normal programming. Sources and witnesses told AFP that soldiers had raided both state television and the offices of a group linked to Bashir's ruling National Congress Party. Army vehicles carrying troops were seen deploying across the centre of Khartoum. Troops raided the offices of the Islamic Movement, the ideological wing of Bashir's ruling National Congress Party, witnesses told AFP. Protesters cheered the passing army trucks as expectations mounted that top brass were poised to meet their demand. Outside army headquarters, dozens of joyful protesters climbed on top of landcruisers and armoured vehicles that had been posted to protect them from intervention by other branches of the security forces.

Braving the searing 42 degree Celsius (108 degree Fahr-



Sudanese anti-regime demonstrators stand on an army armoured military vehicle on 11 April 2019 as they cheer and flash the sign of victory in the area around the army headquarters where protesters have held an unprecedented sit-in now in its sixth day in Sudan's capital Khartoum to call on their president to step down. PHOTO: AFP

enheit) heat, protesters hugged and kissed soldiers in the crowd.

'Political detainees freed'

Sudan's feared intelligence service said it was freeing all

the country's political prisoners, state media reported. "The National Intelligence and Security Service has announced it is releasing all political detainees across the country," the official

SUNA news agency said. But in the eastern cities of Kasala and Port Sudan, protesters stormed NISS buildings after the releases failed to materialise, witnesses said. —AFP ■

World's biggest election tests Modi's hold on power in India

NEW DELHI (India) — Tens of millions of Indians joined nationwide queues Thursday to give their verdict on nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the world's biggest election started amid deadly clashes.

Election officials reported a heavy turnout across the 20 states taking part in the first day of the massive exercise which involves 900 million eligible voters and will take nearly six weeks to complete.

While the 68-year-old Modi remains popular because of his tough stance on national security, he is under pressure over unemployment and controversial economic measures.

Insults and fake news have surged on social media in the run-up to the poll as Modi's right wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the opposition Congress party stake their claims.

On the ground, security forces were on high alert and two members of regional parties were killed in clashes outside a polling station in Tadipatri, Andhra Pradesh state, media reports said. After five people including a local lawmaker were killed by a roadside bomb planted by suspected Maoist rebels on Tuesday, the insurgents were blamed for two voting day blasts in Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra states.

Tens of thousands of armed police, paramilitaries and troops guarded polling stations in Jammu and Kashmir which is in the grip of an insurrection that took India to the verge of a new war with neighbouring Pakistan less than two months ago.

Thousands of parties and candidates are running for of-

fice in the seven separate days of voting in 543 constituencies up to 19 May. Final results will be released on 23 May.

Some 1.1 million electronic voting machines are being taken around the country for the votes, with some transported through jungles and carried up mountains, including to a hamlet near the Chinese border with just one voter. About 142 million people were eligible for the first day of voting. Polling stations in north-eastern states like Arunachal Pradesh bordering China were the first to open, followed by parts of Bihar in the north.

In Assam in the northeast, queues started forming well before voting began, including many of the 84 million first-time voters who could play a decisive role in the outcome. "It's a great feeling to cast the vote, which makes me a part of the democratic system and makes me responsible for electing a good leader," Anurag Baruah, 23, told AFP.

Record appeal

Modi appealed in an early-morning tweet to his 46.8 million followers to "turn out in record numbers."

He swept to power in 2014 with the biggest landslide in 30 years. Critics, however, accuse him of imposing a Hindu agenda, emboldening attacks on Muslims and low-caste Dalits, re-writing school textbooks and re-naming cities. Modi has simplified the tax code and made doing business easier, but some promises have fallen short. Thousands of indebted farmers have committed suicide in recent years.

Growth in Asia's third-biggest economy has been too slow to provide jobs for the roughly one million Indians entering the labour market each month.

"I want a government that thinks about women and brings down the high prices of rice and lentils," Suman Sharman, 50, a housewife in Ghaziabad, told AFP.

Rahul Gandhi, leader of the opposition Congress party and the latest member of his family dynasty hoping to become prime minister, accused Modi of causing a "national disaster".

"No JOBS. DEMONETISATION. Farmers in Pain... Lies. Lies. Lies. Distrust. Violence. HATE. Fear," Gandhi tweeted on Thursday.

"You vote today for the soul of India. For her future. Vote wisely."

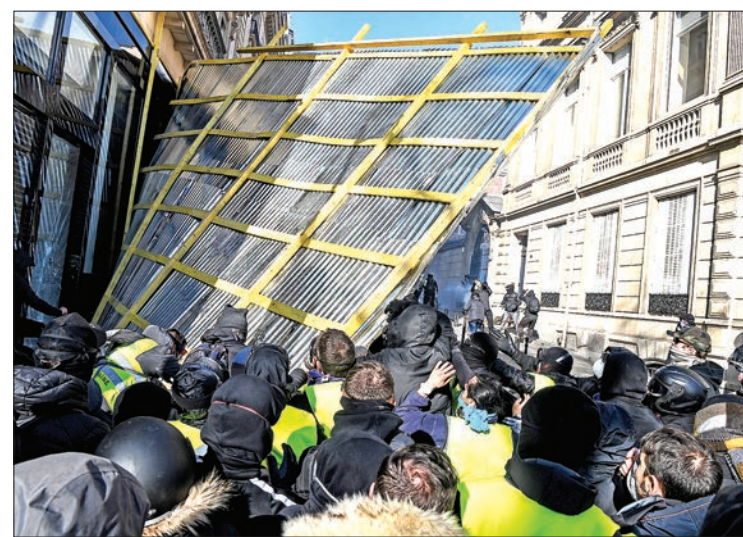
His party won three key state elections in December but India's showdown with Pakistan in February has given Modi's standing a boost.

'Empty suit'

Gandhi, great-grandson, grandson and son of three past premiers, has grown in stature since being derided in leaked US diplomatic cables in 2007 as an "empty suit".

But Modi and the BJP's campaign juggernaut — he has been addressing three rallies a day in the run-up to voting — will be no pushover, promising a \$1.4-trillion infrastructure blitz.

Playing to its Hindu base, the BJP has committed to building a grand temple in place of a Muslim mosque demolished by Hindu mobs in the northern city of Ayodhya in 1992. — AFP ■



Many of the "yellow vest" protests in Paris and other French cities since November have degenerated into vandalism and clashes with police. **PHOTO: AFP**

Macron signs into law controversial French 'anti-rioters' bill

PARIS (France) — French President Emmanuel Macron has signed into law legislation giving security forces greater powers at demonstrations that opponents claim violates civil liberties, the official journal said Thursday.

The bill, which was approved by lawmakers in February, aims to crack down on violence that has marred the "yellow vest" protest movement, which has rocked France since erupting in November.

Interior Minister Christophe Castaner on Thursday hailed the law as a "text which protects the French in the face of insecurity and violence".

"It's a text that protects our institutions and our liberties," he wrote on Twitter.

But in a move indicative of the political trouble caused for Macron by the "yellow vest" movement, France's Constitutional Council, its highest constitutional authority, refused this month to give its green light to one of the most contentious parts of the legislation.

It would have given the authorities the power to ban from demonstrations any individual "posing a particularly serious threat to public order".

That article was accompanied by a file of named people wanted by the police, which critics strongly denounced as violating citizens' freedom of assembly as protected in the constitution.

But the council did approve

two other key parts of the legislation, including giving the authorities the power to search bags and cars in and around demonstrations at the demand of a prosecutor.

It also approved making it a criminal offence to conceal the face at a demonstration, punishable by a year in prison and 15,000 euros (\$17,000) in fines.

The French minister in charge of relations with parliament, Marc Fesneau, had indicated Wednesday that the government was not planning to go back to parliament to adapt the legislation in further debates.

The yellow vest protests against social inequality have proved the biggest challenge to Macron since he came to power, taking much of the momentum out of his reformist agenda.

He has since sought to fight back, touring France in town hall-style meetings to listen to people's grievances in a campaign analysts see as a qualified success.

Macron is expected to address the nation in the coming days with new measures aimed at assuaging the protesters' anger, in particular over what Prime Minister Edouard Philippe on Monday called an "enormous exasperation" over taxes.

The official journal is France's gazette of record and the appearance of legislation in the publication means it has been enacted into law.

— AFP ■



Indian voters stand in a queue to cast their vote at a polling station in Kurnool district of the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, on 11 April 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar lethwei event to be held in Tokyo next month

AN event titled 'Lethwei in Japan — Proof of the Brave' will be held on 17 May at the Korakuen Hall in Tokyo to showcase the Myanmar traditional martial art and strengthen the friendship between the two countries, according to the International Lethwei Federation (Japan).

The upcoming event will be the twelfth Lethwei contest to be held in Japan, according to the International Lethwei Federation of Japan (ILFJ).

The event will have a variety of bouts in different weight classes, and feature Myanmar Lethwei fighters versus Japanese and other foreign martial artists from the US, New Zealand, and Congo.

The fighters will use the style of Myanmar traditional lethwei, including its clinching techniques.

In the 61-kg event, Ye Thway Ni of Myanmar will take

on Makoto, of Japan.

In the 63-kg weight class, Byat Kha of Myanmar will face Shuhei Higashi of Japan.

In the 74-kg weight class, Myanmar's Min Maung Maung will fight against Japan's Kohei Tokeshi.

In the 75-kg weight class, Lokuku Daryl of Congo will take on Will Chope of the US.

In the 83-kg weight class, Shingo Suzuki, former Japan's Pancrace Champion, will fight against Williams, the kickboxing champion from New Zealand.

All the lethwei matches will be held in keeping with the official Lethwei rules, according to the International Lethwei Federation of Japan.

Tickets for the bouts have been priced at Yen10,000 for VIP seats, and Yen7,000, Yen 5,000, and Yen 4,000 for ordinary seats, according to the federation.

—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

MBSF invites players for Qatar Snooker Championship

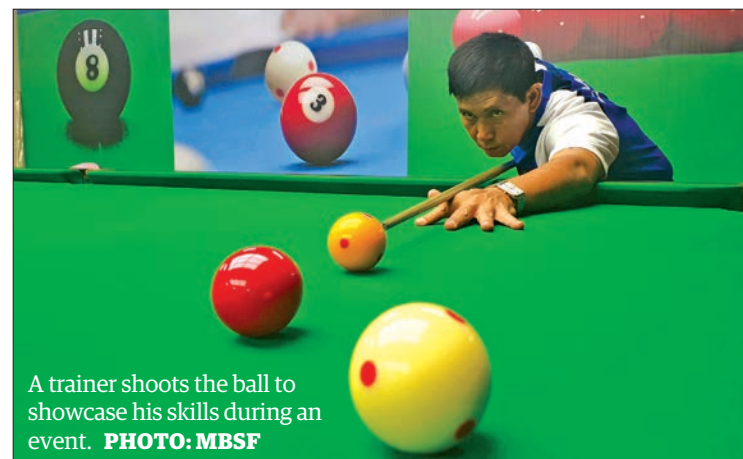
THE Myanmar Billiard and Snooker Federation (MBSF) has invited talented snooker players across Myanmar for a chance to participate in an international snooker championship in Qatar from 16 to 28 June, according to a source with the federation.

The Qatar championship is billed the 'ACBS 35th Asian Men, 7th Asian Team and 8th 6-Red Snooker Championship 2019', and will be held in Doha, the capital of Qatar.

A contest to select players for the championship will be held on 10 May. Players who are interested in participating in the contest need to submit their entries by 8 May to the Myanmar Billiard and Snooker Federation in Yangon. The MBSF can be reached on 09-450040003 and 09-954504003 for details on the contest.

The players who qualify in the selection will get a chance to compete in the Qatar championship, said the source with the MBSF.

There will be three events



A trainer shoots the ball to showcase his skills during an event. **PHOTO: MBSF**

in the Championship: a Men's Event, a Team Event, and a 6-Red Event. Three players from each participating country will be allowed to enter for the Men's Event. However, as the semi-finalist's of the 2018 Championship, Iran and Pakistan will be eligible to enter four players each.

In the Team Event, each participating country will enter one team with a minimum of two players and a maximum of three players. However, as the semi-finalists' of the 2018 Championship,

Pakistan, India, and China will be allowed to enter two teams each.

In the 6-Red Event, each participating country will enter three players. However, as the semi-finalist's of the 2018 Championship, Hong Kong, Pakistan, and Thailand will be allowed to enter four players each.

Meanwhile, host Qatar will be allowed to enter eight players for the Men's Event and the 6-Red Event, and two teams for the Team Event. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Barca show their ugly side to leave United on the ropes

BARCELONA (Spain) — Lionel Messi finished with a bloody nose and swollen cheek but Barcelona left unscathed, with one foot in the semi-finals and Manchester United hoping for another Champions League miracle.

Chris Smalling's clattering challenge in the first half could mean Messi is spared Barca's visit to Huesca on Saturday, their 11-point lead in La Liga affording Ernesto Valverde the luxury of preserving his captain for next

week's second leg.

"He was certainly not comfortable, that's obvious," Valverde said after his team's gritty 1-0 win at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

A fresher and sharper Messi would hardly make United's task any easier. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer was keen to invoke memories of their comeback against Paris Saint-Germain in the previous round but it will be an altogether different task winning at Camp Nou, where Barca have lost only

once in 52 matches and not in the Champions League since 2013.

They faced pressure at Old Trafford but few genuine moments of discomfort, demonstrated by United's failure to muster a single shot on target, for the first time in this competition since March 2005.

"Lacking talent on the field, this United team has to resort to faith," wrote Diario Sport. "The roar of the stadium spurred the players on but it was nothing that could affect Barca."

Their victory was, in part perhaps, due to their opponents' lack of punch but there was merit too in navigating a sloppy performance with both maturity and resilience.

"Neither Messi nor his teammates had their brightest night in Manchester," wrote Mundo Deportivo. "But Valverde's 11 played with common sense and tactical rigour."

Since Solskjaer's arrival, United's greatest threat has been on the counter-attack while Barcelona have been exposed on the break this season by the likes of

Real Betis, Sevilla and Levante.

'Crucial' Pique

Valverde's team limited the danger by sitting deep. "They put us under pressure but we controlled it well," Gerard Pique said. "We were very conscientious," said Jordi Alba. "Sometimes you go on the attack and leave the defence open but we sat in more and balanced the game."

Pique endured a chaotic start to the season, his form and focus questioned in the autumn when Barcelona's defence looked leaky. But Pique has got better and better, his performance on his return to Manchester perhaps the peak of what has been an impressive few months since the turn of the year.

"We put in an excellent performance defensively, our defence is in the best form of the season," Pique said. "Gerard has been crucial," said Sergio Busquets. "Just like always."

Luis Suarez continued his rich vein of form too, delivering again when it mattered most. After his goal sent Barcelona to

victory over Atletico Madrid last weekend, it was his header that met Messi's cross in the 12th minute and proved this game's decisive moment as well.

Luke Shaw's touch deprived Suarez of his first away goal in the Champions League since September 2015, but the satisfaction was evident in the former Liverpool striker's celebration, performed at the Stretford End in front of the fans that had jeered his every touch.

El Pais said of the striker nicknamed, 'El Pistolero': "In England, and even at Old Trafford, the law is set by the gunman."

The question now is whether United can repeat their heroics in Paris and for Barca, avoid a collapse similar to the one that ended in a 3-0 defeat by Roma last year, which knocked them out in the quarter-finals for a third consecutive season. "We know we didn't go through because we didn't deserve it," Alba said. "This season we are aware of what happened and we are more cautious." —AFP ■



Lionel Messi took a blow to the face during Barcelona's 1-0 win over Manchester United on Wednesday. **PHOTO: AFP**