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People throng pagodas, Paritta recited in Nay Pyi Taw

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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# Paritta Recitation Ceremony for 1381 ME held at Presidential Palace

President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and attendees receive the Nine Precepts from the Zaygon Sayadaw at the Paritta Recitation Ceremony for the 1381 Myanmar Era held at Ngushwewar Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 April 2019. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Paritta Recitation Ceremony for the 1381 Myanmar Era was held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were present at the event to listen to the Paritta recitation.

Sanghas led by Ovadacariya Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana Maha Withutayama Zaygon Monastery Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Ratha Guru Dr. Bhaddanta Kavisara attended the ceremony and recited the Parittas.

Also present at the ceremony were Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr. Shwe Hlwan, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat and wife, Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo, Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt and wife, Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thein and wife, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and wife, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Union Ministers, the Chairman of Peace Commission the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman and their wives, Chairman of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air), officials from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Service, the Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command and their wives, Deputy Ministers, Nay Pyi Taw Council members, permanent secretaries, invited guests and other officials.

Before the ceremony, the President, First Lady and the State Counsellor put up offertories to the image of the Buddha in Ngushwewar Hall.

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# New Year Greetings for ME 1381 from President U Win Myint

**My dear esteemed citizens,**

On this auspicious New Year day I send these greetings to all esteemed citizens with blessings for your good health and well- being.

**My dear esteemed citizens,**

On the day I took my oath of office as President in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018, I spoke about the three priority tasks of our Union Government. Furthermore, I have already spoken about the 11 tasks that needed to be carried out for the implementation of the above three priority tasks in my Myanmar New Year day message of last year.

As my New Year day message for this year, I report to you how much our Union Government has been able to achieve in the implementation of our goals during this third year.

President U Win Myint. **PHOTO: MNA**

Our Union Government has undertaken sector-wise reforms. If we were to show visible and tangible results you would see our successes to a certain extent in the area of preventing and combatting corruption, a chronic disease which has taken deep roots for many administrations. Our Union Government has been taking action against corruption in accordance with the law without favoring anyone with only the interest of the people and the country in our minds. We were able to establish branch offices of the Anti-corruption Commission in the regions/states and set up Corruption Prevention Units (CPUs) in the ministries.

With regard to combatting narcotic drugs, apart from the usual actions, we have initiated a special project by making it easy to report direct to the Office of the President. We have elevated the powers of the anti-narcotics police and on the other hand we have started using the reward and punishment system effectively. Because of this it may be seen that we have been more effective and successful.

Our ability to transfer the General Administration Department to the Ministry of the Office of the Union Government is also a significant reform measure because the GAD is an administrative organization that has daily contact with the people. This is because as our Union Government implements the reform measures it is necessary to begin our reform measures from the grass roots level and the GAD is one of the key departments.

We were able to give more agricultural loans than in previous years to improve the lives of farmers; at the same time efforts are being made to ensure that unnecessary obstacles and delays are eliminated in the settlement of land ownership cases. In the same way, in the case of lands which have been confiscated, to review these cases in accordance with State policies; to return lands which have been released to the original owners; and in the case of lands which cannot be released efforts are being made to ensure that reasonable compensation and settlement money are being given. You may all see that compared to previous years effective and expeditious actions are being taken.

The Union Legal Aid Board has been established and instructed to provide assistance and support to people in need of legal services who have been accused, detained, arrested, taken to court, sentenced, and imprisoned, namely poor and destitute people, children, women, elderly, people suffering from infectious diseases, migrant workers and displaced persons.

With regard to human rights, because of efforts being made to organize training courses and seminars, talks to create awareness and spread knowledge, translation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from the Myanmar language to 10 ethnic languages, you may all see that we have been able to give more protection in cases of human rights abuses.

Furthermore, we have been able to preserve and record the traditions and culture of ethnic nationals which are on the verge of extinction, and to prevent the disappearance of their language and literature.

**My dear esteemed citizens,**

The amount of Foreign Direct Investment that have flowed into the country from 1st April of the 2016-2017 to 31st March of the 2018-2019 fiscal amounted to USD 15.99 billion for a total of (584) projects from 22 foreign countries. These projects have been reviewed and approved by the Myanmar Investment Commission during the three year period.

During a similar period, the Myanmar Investment Commission reviewed and approved (359) projects submitted by Myanmar nationals amounting to Kyats 7390.34 billion.

During the first six months period of April to September 2018, the rate of increase of our GDP was 6.5 per cent. During 2018, our country was able to meet all three indicators to be removed from the list of LDC (Least Developed Country) countries.

On the other hand we have imposed tighter administrative controls over departments that have lagged behind in the reform process. We have been making necessary changes to transform the judiciary into an impartial body depended upon by the people and well-respected by them. We built low-cost and affordable housing for the citizens. We have also been able to build housing for government employees to enable them to live in dignity after retirement. We raised the salaries and pensions of government employees to a reasonable amount. We are now giving out pensions using the Wave money mobile system. We were also able to raise the minimum wage of workers. We are making efforts to create more job opportunities within the country and at the same time creating job opportunities in foreign countries. We put in more efforts to protect our migrant workers working abroad and to ensure that they receive all their rights and entitlements. I have noted that measures have been taken for the safety and security of our migrant workers. I have also noted the implementation and emergence of more youth training schools, domestic science schools, and modern garment manufacturing schools. I have also noted rural vocational training schools and projects for training rural people for better paying jobs and obtaining clean drinking water.

We have been able to do more for providing electricity all over the country. We are able to build roads and bridges from east to west and north to south for ease of travel. We were able to upgrade roads and bridges according to each region. We were able to expand the territory for promoting tourism. These included granting visas using the E-visa system and upgrading of airports. We also accomplished projects for protection of river embankments and repair works for embankments. We are also implementing projects for the sustainable management of our natural resources and projects for reforestation. We opened vocational training courses in IDP camps. We also provided financial support to handicapped people. We were able to formulate and issue laws, by laws, regulations, procedures and rules for the efficient and proper use of public funds without wastage in places where they are needed. In cases where there had been lack of responsibility and accountability we have taken effective action. We can thus say that all these measures have been taken in the interests of the people and that to a certain extent there has been progress.

We were able to successfully convene the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong 3rd Session and sign agreements of fundamental principles for a total of (14) points, namely 4 in the political sector, 1 in the economic sector, 7 in the social sector and 2 in the land and natural environment sector.

Mindsets and beliefs that have become habitual for over half a century, habits that are difficult to get rid of, and ways of doing things which are now ingrained in the mind, in spite of obstacles and efforts to cause problems along the path of democratic transition, within this short period of time we may see visible signs of progress. These may be seen as the fruits of success born out of a common belief and commitment that exists between the Government and the people working together in trust and good spirits.

In spite of all these successes and progress, at the same time in the international arena we may see that we are facing and solving efforts to put pressure, hurl criticisms and condemnations, and efforts to take action against us with regard to the Rakhine state issue. We are also facing and solving problems such as security breaches in northern Rakhine, matters relating to repatriation, and internally displaced persons due to conflicts occurring in certain areas. We are also meeting these challenges and solving them. I wish to state that, in fact I regard these difficulties as good opportunities for us to nurture our collective strength.

No matter how many challenges, difficulties and crises our Union Government may have to face, we firmly believe that with the understanding, compassion, participation, and cooperation of the people we will successfully reach our goal of establishing a Democratic Federal Republic. I wish to remind the people to be careful not to fall into the trap of religious, racial and political conflicts. We should also be careful of incidents designed to divert our attention. I also want you all to be careful not to be affected and swayed by efforts to incite the people by making reprisals.

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> I will carry out the implementation of the priority goals of the Union Government which are as follows:
> 1. Rule of law and improvement of the socio-economic life of the people,
> 2. National Reconciliation and internal peace,
> 3. Amending the Constitution which is the foundation for building a Democratic Federal Republic.
>
> **(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)**

> I would like the people to assist and support the peace efforts of our Union Government. I would especially want the youth to look to the future and join in this effort. I have observed that youth have been participating in these efforts.
>
> **(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1st April 2018)**

President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho donating offertories to Sayadaw at the Paritta recitation ceremony at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi donating offertories to Sayadaw at the Paritta recitation ceremony at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

# Paritta Recitation Ceremony for 1381 ME held at Presidential Palace

**FROM PAGE-1**

Following that, the President, First Lady, State Counsellor and the guests in attendance took the Nine Precepts from the Zaygon Sayadaw. The Sayadaw and Sanghas then recited the Parittas.

Next, the President, First Lady, the State Counsellor and the congregation donated offertories to the members of the Sangha.

The President, First Lady, the State Counsellor and the congregation then listened to Sermon from the Sayadaw and poured water to evince the act of maling the donations.

After the ceremony, President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the congregation offered meals to the members of the Sangha. — MNA

*(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

Vice President U Myint Swe and wife donating offertories to Sayadaw at the Paritta recitation ceremony at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

**>> FROM PAGE-2**

**My dear esteemed citizens,**

Our Union Government will not be satisfied and complacent about the successes and the fact that we are now on the path to success. As a government elected by the people, we will always keep the people's interest foremost in our minds and continue with our work. Especially in certain sectors where the people have expressed their dissatisfaction because their expectations have not been met by the Union Government, we need to make a careful assessment and continue with our work. In doing this there is a saying which I have said before, "Let there be change without affecting stability". We will continue our concerted and strenuous efforts by ensuring a well-formulated and effective path, with transparency, responsibility, and cooperation.

I wish to state with deep commitment that our Union Government will work strenuously with firm resolve, strong will, and unflagging zeal, by committing both our body and soul so that our people would be happy as they see their socio-economic life raised, and see with their own eyes the emergence of a modern and developed motherland which can stand tall in the world in dignity and glory.

At this auspicious time of the New Year, I send these good wishes as I conclude this message:

- May there be peace and prosperity in our country,
- May all citizens be blessed with good health and well-being,
- May all your good wishes be fulfilled,
- May all of you be able to participate and cooperate in the building of the Democratic Federal Republic in unity,
- May you all be able to cast aside the habits, beliefs, and theories of the old system and old era; and at this time of democratic transition full of opportunity and auspiciousness, may you all be able to choose together news ideas, new perspectives and new practices.

I thank you all.

# Message of Greetings sent by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, for the 30th anniversary celebrations of establishing peace of the Wa No.2 Speacial Region.

(17 April 2019)
(1381, 13th waxing of Tagu)

ON the auspicious occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of peace of the Wa No.2 Special Region which falls on the 13th waxing day of Tagu, ME 1381, 17th April 2019, let me first send this message of greetings for the good health and well-being of the leaders of Special Region No.2 and our Wa brothers, sisters and families who are sons and daughters of this great Union.

The path of peace which has been initiated since the last 30 years has been able to provide us with cessation of armed conflicts and stability with mutual respect, mutual regard and mutual restraint. We can see with much satisfaction how "Wa" ethnic nationals have been enjoying the fruits of peace, stability and development.

However to obtain durable peace, it is very important for us to create a Union which can guarantee us democracy, human rights, and equality and full rights for ethnic nationals. Only after signing the NCA – Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement would we be able to convene the political dialogues which would result in reduced armed conflicts for maintaining durable peace, efforts for monitoring and conflict resolution, ethnic rights, equal rights and achieving unity. The NCA is a door and not the end of the path or goal. This needs to be understood clearly. It is the path which we all need to traverse as we move towards the goal of establishing the Democratic Federal Republic, which is imbued with the principles of equal rights and self-determination. This is the aspiration of all ethnic nationals including those in the Wa No.2 Special Region. We also wish to inform with seriousness that even after signing the NCA if there are matters which are not covered under this agreement, the EAOs have the option to negotiate and discuss in order to reach agreement.

At this time, the political dialogues have materialized for the first time in history. Ethnic brothers have been demanding all along for these dialogues but were never successful. They made these demands for the emergence of a Democratic Federal Republic and for the settlement of political problems through peaceful political means. Not only that, for the fulfillment of our dream for a Democratic Federal Republic, we have been able to successfully convene the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong 3rd Session and we have already achieved agreement for many fundamental federal principles.

The Union Government has been giving special attention and making strenuous efforts for the participation of the Wa No.2 Special Region and the remaining EAOs in these round table conferences. This is because of our genuine political desire to ensure the participation of all those ethnic national racial groups who should be given the opportunity to participate. Furthermore, I wish to urge with great seriousness that we should move forward from the present stage of maintaining the current ceasefire agreement through mutual restraint to the stage where we would be able to establish sustainable and durable peace for the whole Union.

In conclusion, I send this message of greetings with good wishes for all leaders of the Wa No.2 Special Region, and all Wa ethinc people to be blessed with peace and tranquility at this auspicious time of the New Year with renewed mind and body and new dreams. I wish to urge all of you to participate and work strenuously for genuine peace and in building the Democratic Federal Republic which is our new Union dream.

*(Aung San Suu Kyi)*
*Chairperson*
*National Reconciliation and Peace Centre*

# Government delegation attends 30th peace building anniversary of Wa Special Region No. 2

Union Minister U Thein Swe reads a greetings message sent by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is also Chairperson of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre at the ceremony for the 30th peace building anniversary of Wa Special Region No. 2 in Pangsang yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE ceremony for the 30th peacebuilding anniversary of Wa Special Region No. 2 was held in Pangsang yesterday morning. A government delegation consisting of Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe, Peace Commission (PC) Vice-Chair U Thein Zaw, Shan State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Hla Oo, Director-General of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor U Zaw Htay, and PC Advisor U Moe Zaw Oo attended the ceremony.

Firstly, fireworks were set off and the State Flag and the flag of Wa Special Region No. 2 were hoisted accompanied by the national anthem.

Secondly, a military parade marched and representatives of ethnic races living in the special region and other areas performed traditional ethnic dances, songs and music and then took their place in the ceremony area.

Next, U Pau Yu Chang of the United Wa State Party (UWSP) and leader of the United Wa State Army delivered a speech.

Union Minister U Thein Swe also delivered a speech as a representative of the Union Government and then read a greetings message sent by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is also Chairperson of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre.

*(The greetings message of the Chairperson of the NRPC is covered separately on the same page)*

The Master of Ceremonies then put the formal messages sent by individuals who were involved in the peace building effort of the special region and the 13 ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) on record, and then read the messages.

Following this, the government delegation and other guests were treated to a luncheon at Pangsang's People's Hall.

Afterwards, Union Minister U Thein Swe and delegation met privately with a delegation led by Mr. Sun Guoxiang, China's Foreign Ministry's Special Envoy for Asian Affairs, in People's Hall. They openly discussed tasks related to Myanmar's peace process, regional stability and development, encouraging EAOs who have not signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) to sign the NCA, and plans to arrange meetings with them.

In the afternoon, the government delegation left from Pangsang to Lashio by Tatmadaw helicopter and then flew to Yangon from there. —MNA

*(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

# New Year Greetings of Vice Presidents, Hluttaw Speakers, C-in-C of Defence Services

## Vice President U Myint Swe's New Year Message

**My dear esteemed ethnic brothers and sisters,**

At this auspicious time of the Myanmar New Year, I send these greetings and good wishes for the good health and well-being and auspiciousness of all ethnic brothers and sisters.

At this auspicious time of the Myanmar New Year, I send metta and prayers so that all ethnic nationals will get the peace that they have all been hoping for without delay, that our country would achieve all round development as we obtain peace, and that all our people would be able to enjoy the fruits of development together and equitably.

It is my hope that all our Union citizens would be able to continue the journey of our Union hand in hand with the Union Government with the strength of unity, based on Union spirit characterized by friendship and unity

Vice President U Myint Swe. **PHOTO: MNA**

with renewed spirits. Let us thus move forward on this journey with understanding, trust, with mutual respect and high regard.

I pray that all ethnic national brothers and sisters are blessed with happiness and peace and that their socio-economic life would be elevated and improved.

## Vice President U Henry Van Thio's New Year Message

**My dear esteemed ethnic brothers and sisters,**

At this auspicious time of the Myanmar New Year, I send metta and good wishes for the good health and well-being of all ethnic brothers and sisters and to be blessed with auspiciousness.

For democracy and national development, the unity and cooperation of all ethnic brothers and sisters are the basic foundations of vital necessity. In our efforts to build the Democratic Federal Republic which is the aspiration of all ethnic brothers and sisters, I believe that all of us would be able to overcome all kinds of challenges. We can achieve this with the united strength of all ethnic nationals who have lived together drinking the same water and living on the same land.

I hope that all ethnic nationals would be able to participate enthusiastically from any sector with full Union spirit in nation building tasks.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio. **PHOTO: MNA**

I hope that all ethnic nationals would be able to build friendship, mutual trust and understanding.

May this year be filled with auspiciousness and happiess.

## Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat's New Year Message

On this auspicious occasion of the New Year, first of all I wish to send metta and good wishes for the good health and well-being of all ethnic national brothers and sisters.

This is the time when the old year turns into the New Year, a time of transition. We will strive for the emergence of a democratic system which is people-centered, and for this we are amending and abolishing laws which are no longer in tune with the times. We also need to continue our work for the formulation and enactment of laws which will protect the fundamental human rights of citizens and help promote their benefits and interests. In addition to this, we are working on regional development projects based on

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat.

constituencies to the best of our physical and intellectual capabilities.

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## New Year Message by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

THE word 'Thingyan' descends from 'Samkranti' which means transit or change. Sticking with that original definition, I wish for all the people of Myanmar for a change into a better, more developed and more peaceful situation.

We have passed through a lot of experiences in an assortment of categories throughout ME 1380. May those experiences be a source of strength for ME 1381 and lead to the creation of developmental opportunities for all sectors of our nation. Thank you.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

## Message of Greetings delivered on the first day of the Myanmar New Year by Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw

I wish to first of all send metta and good wishes to all Union citizens living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and all those Myanmar citizens living abroad.

At this auspicious New Year, I pray that all of you will be blessed with good health and well-being and that you would be happy and peaceful throughout the whole year.

Whenever we pass from the old year to the New Year, we should use the challenges and life lessons of the past year as opportunities and good paths for success in the New Year.

We should make improvements where needed and boldly change with new ideas and perspectives towards the correct path.

We should thus make concerted efforts together with the entire people for a bright future.

As we march forth for the emergence of the Democratic Federal Republic which is the common aspiration of all the people of Myanmar, the Hluttaws of the legislative branch, need to always listen to the voice of the people, and always endeavor to know the desires and needs of the people.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

We pledge to do our utmost to be able to formulate laws that would help in bringing peace, rule of law, and national reconciliation, for raising the socio-economic life of the people. We also pledge to ensure that the Hluttaws are truly in accordance with democratic standards.

From the auspicious time of the New Year, all citizens should take it to heart that each of them have duties. May they be able to fulfill their duties, no matter whatever tasks given to them.

May they be able to follow the teachings of their respective religions; and may they be able to perform all their tasks in accordance with the four principle of success namely intention, diligence, strong will and wisdom. These are the good wishes I send to you this day.

# Myanmar enters New Year 1381 ME: Greeting of Sayadaws

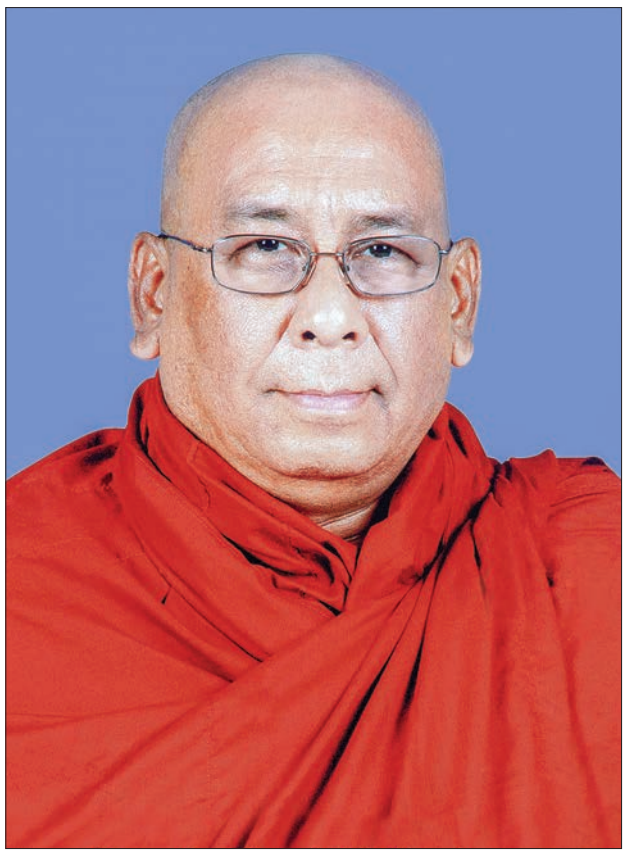
**Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa**

In the New Year, I wish peace of mind and good health for everyone in the world.

May all the people of the world and all creatures enjoy good health and peace.

Only when all practice Buddhanussati, can they recollect the qualities of the Buddha and his enlightenment and that peace can spread the world. Besides, only when we practice the Metta (loving kindness), can peace prevail in the world.

To bring peace to the world and to enjoy peace ourselves, let's practice the Buddhanussati and spreading Metta (loving kindness) way.



**Sitagu Sayadaw Dr. Nannisara, Chancellor of the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy**

Our country is beautiful with natural environment including forests, rivers and mountains. Especially, pagodas and monasteries have been beautifying our country. As a saying goodbye to the old year and as a welcome the new year, I wish our ethnic people of the country have a beautiful mindset. Only when all the people of our country have beautiful mindset, can our country be beautified further.

On one occasion, the Buddha visited the venerable Anuruddha, the venerable Nandiya, and the venerable Kimbila were living at the Park of the Gosinga Sala-tree Wood.

In one Sutta Pitaka, the Buddha visited the park of Gosinga where the Venerable Ashin Anuraddha, the venerable Ashin Nandira and the venerable Ashin Kimila were living. The Buddha told that the garden was beautiful with trees blossom. But, what made the garden more beautiful was His three disciples, told the Buddha to them. Asked how did they beautify the garden, the three disciples answered "We beautify the garden with Samaggi (the Spirit of Unity)".

Samaggi is the unity. Speaking in modern usage, Samaggi is the unity of all ethnic people. We gained the independence through our unity. To safeguard our unity, we must do it through unity. Let me say that to beautify the country, we must build our country through our unity.

Asked which unity did they apply to beautify the garden, they replied that they beautified the park with the Sammagi (the Spirit of Unity).

They said "Surely, venerable sir, we are living in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with kindly eyes."

The three disciples said one set aside what he wish to do and do what other venerable ones wish to do.

The Buddha appreciated their way of living with unity.

Therefore, I would like to urge all ethnic brethren brothers and sisters to relax all old tension from the past and to beautify the country, to relax what one wish and to fulfil other ones wish to do. I wish.

In the conclusion, the three disciples said they were different in body, but one in mind.

Hence, I wish over 130 ethnic tribes of our country have the spirit of unity built by three disciples at the Park of Gosinga. This wish is my goodbye to the old year and welcome the new year.

**Dr. Nanda Mala Bhivamsa, Rector Sayadaw, International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University**

The Year 1380 ME ends and the new year, 1381 ME, begins. I wish all the people of Myanmar protection from danger and peace of mind.

Like we control the heat in the summer, we must try to thwart the fire in our hearts, caused by greediness, hatred, and ignorance.

Greediness leads to selfishness, hatred leads to holding grudges, and ignorance leads to not understanding the difference between right and wrong. They are internal passions.

Only when we control the internal fire can we enjoy genuine peace. To bring true peace in our hearts, we must practice quenching the fire in our hearts through the insight of meditation.

May all beings enjoy eternal peace in their hearts.

# Wishes for Myanmar New Year

Interview & Photo by
Thi Thi Min

**U Khin Maung Htay**
Member of Shwedagon Pagoda's Board of Trustees
Vice Chairperson, Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group

We have many different races, religions and languages in our country. And since this diversity is the basis for our Union it's important for us to have mutual understanding and respect towards each other. The interfaith group is continuously striving towards this objective. I wish good health and prosperity on all the citizens and pray for their safety from all danger.

**Dr. Hla Tun**
Secretary, Thanandanadama Palaka (Hindu) Federation

As we cross over into the new year, I wish for the health and safety of all the citizens of Myanmar, our leaders, and security personnel working around the clock at the border to maintain national security.

Our country is peaceful. All throughout history, the people of Myanmar have coexisted harmoniously with each other to this day but we must all pray that that peace doesn't vanish in our time. Our words and actions must reflect the integrity of the nation and similar to how our ancestors lived, we must leave our differences behind in the old year and welcome the new year with renewed minds and hearts. May everyone succeed in their endeavours for their country and their religion. I wish good health and prosperity to all.

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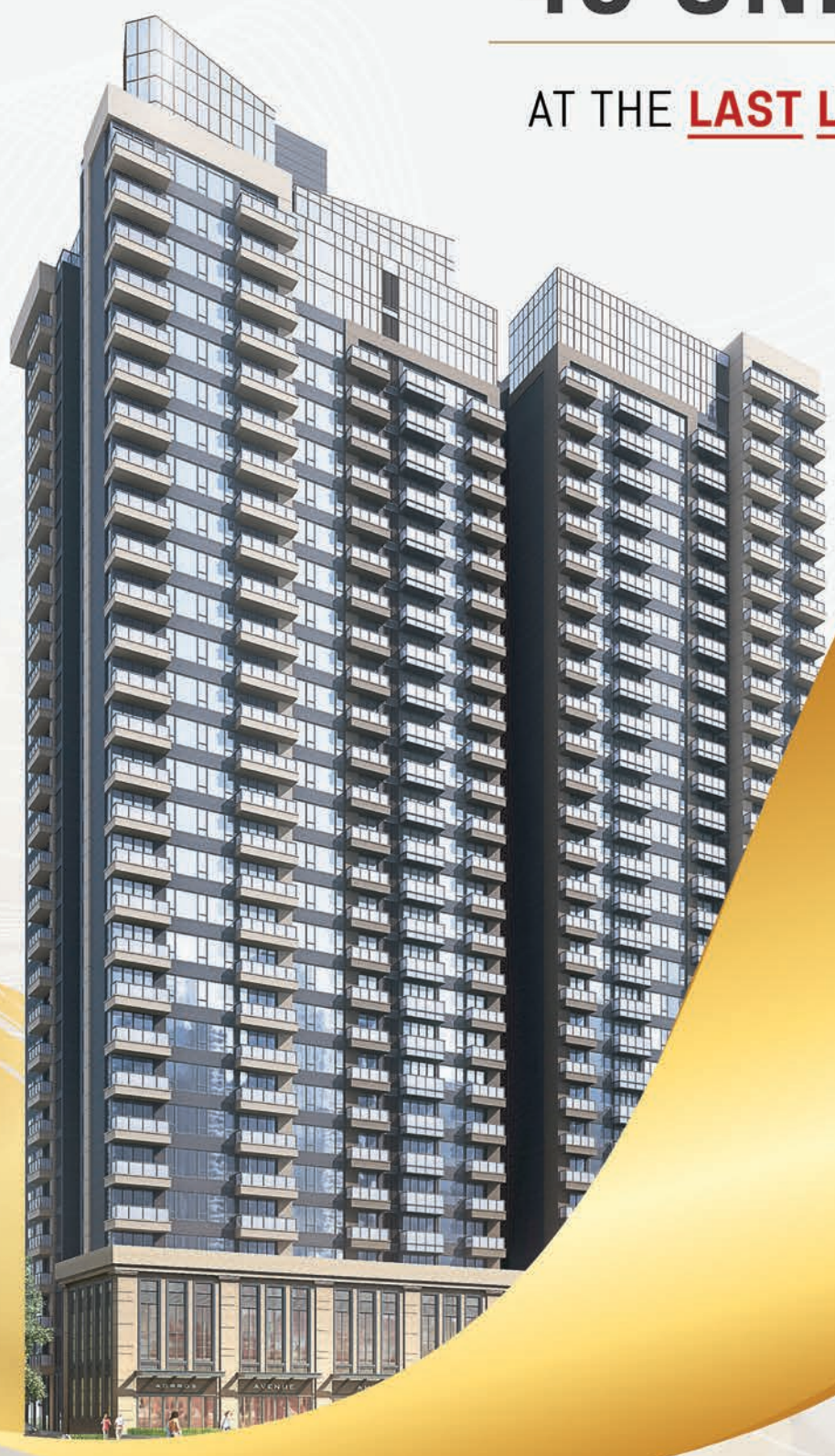
# THE CENTRAL

## 45 UNITS LEFT

AT THE **LAST LAKE-VIEW** TOWER



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# May a democratic federal Union be established with collective strength of people incoming years

THE old year has ended and the new year has begun. We have all had many experiences in the year 1380 ME. In the new year, everyone must try to build a new outlook on life. We must get rid of bad habits from the previous year and adopt good habits to create a new life.

In the New Year, people must take lessons from the troubles, difficulties, strengths, weaknesses, and challenges observed in the past year.

In the old year, we witnessed achievements in tackling several obstacles to the democratic transition, thanks to the collective efforts of the government and the people.

Fighting deep-rooted malpractices such as corruption and combating drug-trafficking have been significant steps taken during the previous year.

Without the participation of the people, we could not have seen any progress in fighting dogmatic habits and beliefs, deeply rooted for over half a century.

At the same time, the people of the country must remain alert and not fall into the trap of conflict, and have a far-sighted vision on the transition to democracy.

The quantum of agricultural loans has been increased and works for solving nationwide land ownership issues have picked up momentum, after restrictions were relaxed so as to avoid delays in solving the issues.

In the midst of these achievements, we are facing a different set of difficulties in the transition towards a democracy, building a democratic federal Union, the national economy, the Rakhine State issue and geo-political matters, in addition to the peace process.

The recent armed conflicts in Rakhine State have made the situation more complex there. While seeking a sustainable solution to the issue, we are helping the people displaced by armed conflicts to get over the pain of uncertainty over their livelihoods due to the conflicts.

The challenges can be considered as an opportunity for building the collective strength of the people.

No matter the challenges and obstacles ahead of us, we are confident that we can achieve success in building a democratic federal Union through the collective strength of the ethnic brethren born in the Union with friendship, mutual support, mutual assistance, mutual respect, and mutual understanding, based on the Union Spirit.

At the same time, the people of the country must remain alert and not fall into the trap of conflict, and have a far-sighted vision on the transition to democracy.

At the same time, we need to work with the united strength of the people and all branches of the democracy, professionals, and civil society organizations in marching towards our goal of a democratic federal Union.

May the democratic federal Union be established with the 'collective strength' of the ethnic people in the coming years.



# Accomplishments of Nay Pyi Taw Council: Focusing on development, cleanliness and rule of law in urban and rural areas

"Nay Pyi Taw is part of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network and is working towards the status through an Action Plan to improve on three areas."

U Myo Aung, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council

Interviewer: Thi Thi Min
PHOTOS: MAIKHA

*THE Nay Pyi Taw Council is setting its goal of development in both towns and villages in sight and is working diligently to achieve this. During the third year of the current administration, the Nay Pyi Taw Council has accomplished several work plans in Nay Pyi Taw's development, carrying out cleanliness of the city and upholding rule of law.*

*The media team enjoyed the chance to interview with the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung about the progress of the council during the third year of the incumbent government.*

Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung

The Nay Pyi Taw Council Building

**Q: What are some of the work plans the Nay Pyi Taw Council completed during the three years of the current administration?**

**A:** There are 8 townships with 1 million residents in Nay Pyi Taw: around 350,000-400,000 is government employees while 650,000-700,000 are local populace. The main focus -especially in our third year- was to fill the gaps in health care, electricity, transportation and education that people need and the Nay Pyi Taw Council embraced the measures with great vigor. In addition, we are working with the Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee to bring life to the city with clean streets, thriving greenery and neat public spaces in line with the laws and regulations in place.

**Q: How is the council developing the education sector, amongst others?**

A: In the education sector, we had over kyats 5492 million approved for the 106 work plans during the 2018-2019 financial year using the different funding sources from national to other donations. Over 96 basic education schools have been upgraded with additional 566 teachers employed on the national and regional levels along with introducing the new curriculum.

**Q: What about the health sector for the public?**

**A:** The council has spent over kyats 1700 million on 24 different work plans for its 6 month mini-budget. Our current emphasis is on immunization program such diseases as polio, diphtheria and acute pneumonia. There were no health outbreaks last year. There is also the 1000 bed Nay Pyi Taw hospital with 23 specialist units. Our biggest accomplishment in last year has been on the new wing for operating heart surgery. We operated on 79 patients successfully in our first batch and has treated over 100 patients over the 5 months. There is also the new X-ray machine installed that reduces the side-effects for the operator. Also, as part of the One Stop Service – a new initiative by the current administration- we treat and house child sexual abuse victims and orphaned/abandoned babies temporarily before handling them with the respective government departments.

**Q: What about improvements regarding infrastructure such as roads and bridges building?**

**A:** The council is focusing on the big roads to connect the villages. There are a total of 624 work plans with kyats 31814 million budget from different sources for funding. These are spent towards upgrading existing infrastructure such as the Yangon-Mandaly highway with proper drainage so there will be no floods during monsoon.

**Q: Can you talk to us more about the Irrigation, Livestock and Farmland sectors?**

**A:** Nay Pyi Taw has a lot of farmers and most of their livelihood is working in the farms. This made Nay Pyi Taw very self-sufficient in the region regarding staples. There are over 700,000 farmers working on rice paddy fields of 17000 acres producing up till 15 million tons of grains. The council is building drainage systems so there will not be floods during heavy rains. In the 2018-19 year alone, these systems have protected up till 2400 acres of land from flood. Regarding livestock, the council is also distributing vaccines along with giving training on raising livestock to over 5000 people.

**Q: Can you elaborate more on distributing electricity?**

**A:** The biggest advantage for Nay Pyi Taw is that we get our energy from dams including upper and middle Paunglaung dams. Out of the 796 villages in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, 432 villages have access to electricity with plans for the national grid to roll out to 48 more villages. The rest are also planned to gain access through the 2019-2020 and 2025-2026 financial years as we build more substations and wire lines.

**Q: What about access to clean water?**

**A:** There are a total of 30 dams that Nay Pyi Daw Development Committee is in charge of and 10 other managed by the Irrigation Department for drinking water. We also build wells for areas that the dams cannot reach. During the 2018-2019 financial year, there was a budget of kyats 6200 million for over 100 work plans.

**Q: Can you elaborate on the plans for the socioeconomic development in the area?**

**A:** Every year at Uttara Thiri Township, the residents are often burdened by floods in the area. With the council's work plans activities, we managed to save over 2900 houses and 3500 acres of farm land from floods. There are also 43 additional housing units built for government employees in the 2017-18 financial year and 76 more during the 2018-19 financial year that is almost 20% finished. For socioeconomic development, there are more than 22 vocational training opened and planning to organize the 72 training workships with a kyats 135 million budget planned for the 2018-2019 financial year.

**Q: What about regarding rule of law?**

**A:** There were educative talks by the law enforcements officers educating people on crime. There are 51 CCTV cameras that operate 24/7 around the gates of the towns. We have also amped up our efforts against drugs, busting 93 cases alone last year.

**Q: Can you explain to us about the small loans program with little interest that is available for Nay Pyi Taw locals?**

**A:** EXIM Bank is working towards giving small loans with minimal interest to start farmers up for their crops. This year, the bank was able to lend to 22001 members for around kyats 3366 million. Such kind of systems protect farmers against loan sharks and lowers their interest by heart. For other SME loans, the second round of the SME program loaned kyats 4132 million.

**Q: What about the efforts towards a clean city?**

**A:** There was a new market opened last year – the Aung Zabu Market. Building such markets takes the vendors off the streets, keeping the streets cleaner and also helping with traffic and trash created from the sales. There were also 77 concrete bridges built, with over 3244 feet long roads built in townships in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area. We also decided to give out tenders to build water-fountain park in 2018 and are already drawing out tender application outlines and requirements.

Regarding public information, we just started broadcasting the CATV line starting 2019 February. The channel will be broadcasting news, prospective govt projects and other services planned for Nay Pyi Taw. The Nay Pyi Taw Zabuthiri hospital have also recently expanded in 2018 so that it will be able to accommodate more patients.

A unique thing we have done is regarding illegal squatters. There are over 1200 people illegally squatting in Nay Pyi Taw. We have started projects on building affordable housing on a 15 year installments.

**Q: What about preventative measures against natural disasters?**

**A:** Nay Pyi Taw, like other states and regions in Myanmar, experiences a lot of natural disasters with a total of 85 last year. This affected around 934 households with a total of 19000 people with 86 million kyats aid distributed for rehabilitation. There have been educational talks for natural disasters and earthquake simulations along with up till 227722 students trained by volunteer groups on aiding during a natural disaster.

**Q: Can you elaborate more on the Smart cities initiative?**

**A:** Nay Pyi Taw is part of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network and is working towards the status through an Action Plan to improve on three areas. The Hotel and embassy zones have been selected as a pilot area with smart street lighting installed in collaboration with Singapore. E-Government along with public services using ICT are also being implemented towards this step. The GIS database is also under construction so that people can look up electricity voltages and crowds in certain places online. The GIS pilot project is currently implemented in Thapyay Gone district.

**Q: Any additional comments?**

**A:** There are 5 main roadmaps that our senior advisor has given. Within those, there is a call for discussion regarding development. Our focus is tourism. We are currently working on building a studio for entertainment on an international scale for international attraction. Hopefully, our department contributes to the best of our abilities to aid in developing not only Nay Pyi Taw, but the country as a whole.

*Translated by Myat Thu*

Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung meets Hluttaw representatives,departmental officials, town's elders in Tatkone Town on 2 March 2019.

Union Minister U Thein Swe, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr. Myo Aung, Pyithu Hluttaw representative, in-charge of May May Hospital and representatives of employer and employee cut ribbon to open May May Hospital and Pharmacy in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 26 March 2019.

# Parittas recited by Members of the Sangha at Pyithu Hluttaw

The congregation receive the Five Precepts from the Sayadaw at the Paritta reciting ceremony at Pyithu Hluttaw Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

A ceremony to recite Parittas was held at the Pyithu Hluttaw building-C in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday to mark the New Year Day.

It was attended by the Members of the Sangha led by Ashin Tejo Sara, Presiding Sayadaw of the Raja Dhani Monastery in Ottarathiri Township.

First, the congregation received the Five Precepts from the Sayadaw.

Afterwards, the Members of the Sangha recited Parittas and the congregation presented offertories to the Members of the Sangha and shared the merits gained.

Also present at the ceremony were Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Ti Khun Myat, Deputy Speaker U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein and staff families of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office.—MNA

*(Translated by GNLM)*

# Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker attends Jivitadana ceremony, provides aid to aged people in Myawady

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife Nant Kyin Kyi attended a Jivitadana (lifesaving deed) ceremony to release fish and to provide aids to the aged people in Myawady, Kayin State, yesterday.

At the ceremony held under the No.1 Friendship Bridge in Myawady, Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife, together with dignitaries, released about 20,000 fishes into the Thaungyin River.

Following the ceremony, Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife attended a ceremony to provide aids to the elder peoples aged 85 and above at the Thathana Hitakari Building of the Shwemyinwun Pagoda in Myawady.

At the ceremony, they presented cash and aids to 75 aged people.

Also present at the ceremonies were Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Sein Bo, Kayin State Hluttaw Representative U Thant Zin Aung and U Aik Kyan Kham and local authorities.—Maung Sein Lwin

*(Translated by GNLM)*

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and people release fish into the Thaungyin River. **PHOTO: MIN HTET**

# Wishes for Myanmar New Year

FROM PAGE-6

**U Nyunt Maung Shein**
President, Islamic Religious Affairs Council
Vice Chairperson, Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group

As Myanmar crosses over to its new year in accord with its traditions, I wish to extend a message of greetings as a member of the Islamic community. Our country exists with diverse races and religions living together.

This new year period is concurrent with the traditions and customs of Myanmar people and is also a festival that celebrates solidarity and kindliness. People are happy during the period of transition into the new year. We wash away the biases and impurities attached in our minds from the past. We bathe the elderly while some enter into religious life. It is very heart-warming.

I would like to welcome in the new year with a wish for all the people of Myanmar to coexist in harmony into the future as we all happily follow the teachings and customs of our race or religion.

U Khin Maung Htay.
Member of Shwedagon Pagoda's Board of Trustees
Vice Chairperson, Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group

Dr. Hla Tun.
Secretary, Thanandanadama Palaka (Hindu) Federation

U Nyunt Maung Shein.
President, Islamic Religious Affairs Council
Vice Chairperson, Myanmar Interfaith Dialogue Group

Dr. Thar Nyan.
General-Secretary, Young Men's Christian Association

**Dr. Thar Nyan**
General-Secretary, Young Men's Christian Association

I am a Christian who was born and raised in Myanmar, drinks its water and upholds loyalty to the nation as its citizen. I'm always excited when Thingyan comes around. I simply adore this Myanmar tradition.

In witness of our Lord, I wish to utter a prayer for the country and all its citizens. May everyone have peace of mind in the coming year. May peace perpetuate across Myanmar. May peace find its way to the states of Rakhine, Kachin and Shan where it has not settled yet. May everything be as peaceful as the calm sensation of Thingyan's water.

May every task for national development succeed. May all armed conflicts cease to exist in the coming year and usher in a modern, developed democratic nation. May poverty and hunger be resolved. May businesses succeed and develop. I also wish for the countries of the world that have and are misunderstanding Myanmar. May their challenges and difficulties vanish as well. And may the countries how falsely doubt Myanmar peacefully see the truth. ■

*(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

# People throng pagodas, Paritta recited in Nay Pyi Taw

PEOPLE thronged pagodas, monasteries, and homes for the aged, and took the Precepts, bathed and paid their respects to elders, released animals, and made donations in Nay Pyi Taw on the Myanmar New Year, yesterday.

Yesterday was the first day of the year 1381ME. It was also an auspicious day for Myanmar citizens, who performed good deeds to cleanse the impurities in the mind, and took part in the water festival to cleanse their bodies, symbolically.

On the morning of the New Year, famous pagodas and monasteries were crowded with people taking the Precepts, listening to chants recited by monks, releasing animals, and making donations.

Sayadaws praying for the wellbeing of Myanmar citizens and people around the world in the first day of ME 1381. **PHOTO: MNA**

In the morning, the 11th New Year Paritta Recitation Ceremony was held in the Cave of the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw. The ceremony was attended by Members of the Sangha, led by Ovada Cariya Sayadaw of the Board of Trustees of the Uppatasanti Pagoda, Maha Visudarama Zay Gone Monastery, and Bhadanta Visara, as well as the Minister of Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Deputy Minister U Kyi Min, members of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, members of the Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee, members of the board of trustees, religious groups, officials, and pilgrims.

During the ceremony, the congregation received the Nine Precepts from Sayadaw Bhaddanta Visara of Maha Visudarama Zay Gone Monastery, Pyinmana, and listened to a recitation of the Parittas by the Members of the Sangha.

Then, the Union Minister, the Deputy Minister, and officials presented offertories to the Members of the Sangha.

Afterwards, the Members of the Sangha, led by Ovada Cariya Sayadaw of the Board of Trustees of the Uppatasanti Pagoda, Maha Visudarama Zay Gone Monastery, and Bhadanta Visara flew over the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area in a helicopter, and recited the Parittas, sprayed Paritta water, and spread loving-kindness, praying for the wellbeing of Myanmar citizens and people around the world.

The famous pagodas in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area — the Satta Saddha Pagoda, the Maha Thetkya Yanthi Buddha Image, the Datusaya Dat Paungsu Pagoda, the Lokkha Marazein Pagoda, the Yan Aung Myin Pagoda, among others — were also crowded with Buddhist devotees taking precepts, donating food, and releasing animals.

Additionally, the Members of the Sangha were invited to the ministries, wards, residences of civil servants, and prayer buildings (Dhammayone) in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, and Buddhist devotees listened to the Members of Sangha reciting the Parittas and shared merits for their good deeds. —MNA

*(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)*

# People commemorate New Year at pagodas in Yangon

YANGON'S pagodas were filled with devout merit makers yesterday as they welcomed in the first day of ME 1381.

**Shwedagon Pagoda**

The Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees organised Paritta recital with 108 monks at 5 am. At 5:30 am, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadaws, Ovadacariya Sayadaws and invited sanghas were provided with breakfast "*soon*" at the old Buddha images prayer hall. At 6 am, the audience listened to the recitation of Paritta by Ovadacariya Sayadaws.

At 8 am in the old Buddha images prayer hall, the 35th group blood donation was held with the Board of Trustees' member U Aung Myat, who is also chairman of the donation holding subcommittee, delivering the opening speech.

Prof. Dr. Daw Thida Aung, Head of the Pathology Department of Yangon General Hospital, then shared knowledge on blood donations. The board of trustees handed over honorary certificates to the doctors in attendance and to the donors of nutrition for the blood donors.

The Shwedagon Pagoda is crowded with people on the New Year of ME 1381. **PHOTO: HLA MOE**

**Thiri Mingalar Kaba-Aye Pagoda**

At the Thiri Mingalar Kaba-Aye Pagoda, the board of trustees organized a ceremony for sila sermon by Sayadaw Bhaddanta Agga Wanta of Abhidhamma Pitakat Maha Department, Kayah Hostel Adminstrator, State Pariyatti Sasana University, Yangon. The new year ceremony was held at 1 pm, with board of trustees chairman U Win Thein speaking of the auspiciousness of the new year, after which they began the reciting.

**Sule Pagoda**

The Sule Pagoda board of trustees organized a sila sermon by Sayadaws at 7 am and donors provided food charity.

**Swe Taw Myat Pagoda**

At 7 am in the cave of the Swe Taw Myat Pagoda (Yangon) the audience took the eight precepts of the board of trustee's Ovadacariya Sayadaw KanU Zaytawan monastery's Patron Sayadaw Agga Maha Ganthavasaka Pandita Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Nanda Sarmi Biganta, after which the Sayadaws recited the Paritta and the audience poured libations. The 21st Ziwita Dana fish release ceremony then commenced.

**Kyaik Wine Pagoda**

From the eve of Thingyan to the first day of the New Year, the board of trustees of the historic Aparazita Santawshin Kyike Wine Pagoda invited Sayadaws for sila ceremonies. Yesterday, the audience offered new year breakfast 'soon' meals in the morning and took eight precepts from Phyu monastery Sayadaw at 10 am. Donors provided charity meals as well.

In this new year's, monks recited Parittas from motor vehicles along the main roads of Yangon Region's townships while sprinkling holy water. Ward communities also invited monks to recite Parittas in their streets.

Some public and private vehicles offered free transportation to monks, nuns, and pilgrims.

Other merit making such as caring for the personal hygiene of the elderly, paying respects to the elders and the Jivitadana donation of releasing animals from harm or captivity was also observed at various locations. — Yi Yi Myint

*(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar**
**Office of the President**
**Order No. 13/2019**

13th Waxing of Tagu, 1381 ME
(17 April, 2019)

## Amnesty Order

As a gesture of marking the Myanmar New Year, to ensure the peace of mind of the people and taking into consideration the humanitarian concerns, 9,535 prisoners serving jail terms in various correctional facilities across the country have been given unconditional amnesty today under the Sub-section (1), Section 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

*Sd/Win Myint*
*President*
*Republic of the Union of Myanmar*

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar**
**Office of the President**
**Order No. 14/2019**

13th Waxing of Tagu, 1381 ME
(17 April, 2019)

## Amnesty Order

As a gesture of marking the Myanmar New Year and with a view to maintaining friendship with other countries and taking into consideration the humanitarian concerns, 16 foreign prisoners serving jail terms in various correctional facilities across the country have been given unconditional amnesty and expelled today under the Sub-section (1), Section 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

*Sd/Win Myint*
*President*
*Republic of the Union of Myanmar*

## Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat's New Year Message

FROM PAGE-5

I pray that the people would participate and cooperate with our Hluttaw in building the Democratic Federal Republic. I pray that the Republic of the Union of Myanmar would be peaceful and achieve development. I pray that all the Union citizens, ethnic brothers and sisters, be free from all kinds of dangers and that they have good health and happiness. Thank you all.

## Over 260 prisoners released in Myeik

THE authorities released 265 prisoners from Myeik Prison and Kyaukpyu Taung labour camp yesterday.

Of the total prisoners, 149 men and 37 women were released from Myeik Prison yesterday afternoon. A total of 79 men were released from the Kyaukpyu Taung labour camp yesterday morning. Officials from the Correctional Department in Myeik offered words of encouragement to those who were released, and paid them travel allowance and wages. — Khine Htoo (IPRD)

*(Translated by TTN)*

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# Government delegation arrives ahead of Wa 30th peace building anniversary

The government delegation led by Union Minister U Thein Swe visits Pangsang. **PHOTO: MNA**

A GOVERNMENT delegation travelled to Wa Special Region No. 2 to attend their 30th anniversary on peace building. They visited the Martyr's Monument and the Peace Monument in Peace Commemoration Park in Pangsang, and the Mongkhan Bridge and the old headquarters of the Burma Communist Party located between Pangsang and Mongkhan on 16 April.

The delegation consisted of Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe, Peace Commission (PC) Vice-Chair U Thein Zaw, Shan State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Hla Oo, Director-General of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor U Zaw Htay, and PC Advisor U Moe Zaw Oo.

In the evening, Union Minister U Thein Swe and delegation attended the dinner reception hosted by U Pauk Yu Chang, Chairman of the United Wa State Party, and members.

The government representatives, ethnic armed organizations and invited guests were treated to traditional Wa music, dances and performances. — MNA

*(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

# 677 inmates released from Insein Central Prison

A total of 677 prisoners, including two foreigners, were freed from the Insein Central Prison yesterday, according to the prison authorities.

Of the total prisoners, 627 were men and 50 were women.

They had been charged under the Police Disciplinary Act, the Defence Services Act, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, among other laws.

The prisoners were released from Insein Central Prison along with the Shwe Thathay, Tawtangyi, Hlayhlawinn, Eyclaung, Aung Chantha, and Mingon labour camps. — MNA

*Translated by TTN*

677 prisoners from the Insein Central Prison in Yangon were given amnesty yesterday. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

# Over 200 prisoners released in Rakhine State

ACTING on an order from the President's office, the authorities yesterday released 210 prisoners from prisons in Rakhine State.

Of the total prisoners, 116 inmates, including 109 men, 6 women, and one foreigner, were released from the Sittway Prison; 39 inmates, including 35 men, three women, and one foreigner, were released from the Buthidaung Prison; 31 men were freed from the Kyaukpyu Prison; and, 24 prisoners, including 23 men and one woman, were released from Thandwe Prison.

The freed inmates were welcomed by their families and relatives. — Tin Tun (IPRD)

*Translated by TTN*

# Over 430 prisoners from Mandalay Prison receive amnesty

FOUR hundred and thirty seven prisoners from Mandalay Prison received presidential pardons yesterday, among them 39 are women and three are foreigners, and most were serving terms for drug trafficking cases.

"The prisoners who are released today have received correctional training and they also have received vocational skills. So, they are ready to serve the interest of their families and the country when they back their communities," said U Cho Win, Deputy Director of the Mandalay Central Prison. A total of 698 prisoners from Mandalay, Meikhtila, Myingyan, Yamethin, NyaungU and Nay Pyi Taw prisons were released yesterday. —Min Htet Aung (Mann Sub-printing House)

*(Translated by GNLM)*

## IN Picture

# Rakhine State Govt, people hold ceremony to pay respect to the aged

A troupe performs a traditional group dance at the ceremony to pay respect and provide aids to elder Rakhine people at the 55th Rakhine Traditional Ceremony in Sittway yesterday.
At the ceremony local people and authorities paid respect and provided aids to 108 people aged 85 and above in Sittway. Meanwhile, authorities will present aids door to door to over 980 aged people who could not present at the ceremony. **PHOTO: TIN TUN (IRPD)**


## Invitation for Bids

**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR**
**NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT**
**SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE**
IDA Credit No.:_5727-MM
Dated **18th April, 2019**

**Contract Title: Distribution Transformer for National Electrification Project**
**Reference No. : MOEE-NEP-P2/C1-G1/19**

1. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the National Electrification Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds towards payments under the contract for Distribution Transformer for National Electrification Project.

2. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for supply of 11/0.4 kV- **50 kVA** and **100 kVA**, distribution transformer , for the total quantities of **4,900** transformers to be delivered in **2019** and **2020** to multiple destinations in all Regions and States of Myanmar. Domestic preference with the margin of 15% will apply. The goods will be grouped into **4 lots** and bidders may submit bid for any one or more lots. Evaluation and award of contract will be on a lot-wise basis.

3. Bidding will be conducted through the International Competitive Bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers [edition of January 2011 revised in July 2014] ("Procurement Guidelines"), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Procurement Guidelines. In addition, please refer to the paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7 setting for the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Project Manager,Office No (27), Ministry of Electricity and Energy, nep.pmomoep@gmail.com and inspect the bidding documents during office hours 10:00 to 16:00 hours at the address given below.

5. Bidders can request complete set of bidding document from the purchaser via E-mail as mention below:

Attention : Project Manager
Project Management Office (National Electrification Project), Office Building No.27, Ministry of Electricity and Energy
City : Nay Pyi Taw
ZIP Code : 15011
Country : The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Telephone : +95 67 3431175
Facsimile number : +95 673431176
Electronic mail address : nep.pmomoep@gmail.com

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 am, **4th June, 2019**.Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the bidders' designated representatives at the address below at 10:00 am, **4th June, 2019**.

Yadanar Hall, Office Building No.27,
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
City: Nay Pyi Taw
ZIP Code: 15011

7. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security as described in the bidding document.

8. The address referred to abovepara 4 and 5 are :

Attention:
Project Manager
Project Management Office (National Electrification Project)
Office Building No.27, Ministry of Electricity and Energy
City: Nay Pyi Taw
ZIP Code: 15011
Country: The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Telephone: +95 67 3431175
Facsimile number: +95 673431176
Electronic mail address: nep.pmomoep@gmail.com


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# Cave temples around Hpa-an crowded with travelers

People visit Bayin Nyi Cave during Thingyan Festival holidays in Hpa-an, Kayin State. **PHOTO: SAW MYO MIN THEIN (IPRD)**

TRAVELERS across the country thronged the cave temples around Hpa-an Town in Kayin State during the water festival.

There are many caves located in the vicinity of Hpa-an. Most of the caves are ancient, and there also several structures of cultural interest around them. Thanks to efficient transportation facilities, it has become easier to reach the cave temples nowadays. Local and foreign travelers are visiting the areas daily, partly because they are interested in the traditional cultural mores of the local ethnic people.

"This is my first time in Kayin State. Now, 22 members of our family are all here in Kayin State. We have already been to five significant caves in the state. When we entered the natural water cave near the Yathaepyan cave, we couldn't see anything inside and heard only the sound of falling water. At the time, we felt a bit scared. But, when we saw other boats, our fear dissolved, and we played with the water," said Daw Soe Soe Moe, a local visitor who lives near theKyauktan Township. "We visited these areas 20 years ago. At that time, the roads were not good for smooth and safe transportation. We drew water from the ground to shower. Now, they have built concrete ponds to shower," said Daw Khin Win, a local visitor from Mandalay. Most people visited the caves around Hpa-an Town for rest and recreation during the water festival. — Saw Myo Min Thein (IPRD) ■

*(Translated by Hay Mar)*

# 644 traffic mishaps reported in Yangon Region in Jan-Mar

A TOTAL OF 644 road accidents were reported in Yangon Region between January and March, according to an official with the No. 2 Traffic Police Unit (Yangon).

In January, 85 people were killed and 269 injured in 232 accidents, while in February, 53 people were killed and 174 were injured in 194 mishaps. Meanwhile, in March, 59 people died and 282 were injured in 218 accidents.

Of the total accidents, 410 cases were reported in the Yangon City Development Committee area, in which, 135 people were reported dead and 434 injured.

Last year, 38 accidents were reported in Yangon Region during the water festival, between 13 and 16 April. Of them, only two accidents were caused due to merrymakers and revellers playing with water, while the rest occurred due to other reasons. To reduce road accidents, the traffic police are conducting regular awareness talks and distributing pamphlets. The traffic police have filed charges against suspected reckless drivers under Sections 279, 337, 338, and 304 (A) of the Penal Code. — Phyo Cho ■

*(Translated by Hay Mar)*

# Illegal timber seized in Bamauk Township

Authorities from the Forest Department inspect seized illegal timber in Bamauk Township, Katha District, Sagaing region. **PHOTO: KO MIN (INDAW)**

ILLEGAL timber and other related items were seized in the Manmaw Forest Reserve, near Myoma Gaung Kait Village, Bamauk Township, Katha District, Sagaing Region on 16 April.

Acting on a tip off, a team led by U Myint Naing Oo, Assistant Director of District Forest Department confiscated 21 teak logs weighing 4.5 tons, a cutting machine, saw mill and other related items in their operation.

Authorities also seized illegal 260 ownerless timber weighing 1.8150 tons in the forest reserve. These seized timber and lumber were handed over to the Myoma Gaung Kait Village administrator. Now the Forest Department is seeking the owner of these timbers to take legal action.—Ko Min (Indaw) ■

*(Translated by Hay Mar)*

Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo (l) on 17 April, 2019. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

# Indonesia's 'everyman' leader on track to beat firebrand ex-general

JAKARTA (Indonesia) — Indonesia's JokoWidodo was on track to be re-elected leader of the world's third-biggest democracy as unofficial results put him in a comfortable lead over firebrand ex-general PrabowoSubianto after voting closed Wednesday across the 17,000-island archipelago.

While official results are not due until next month, a series of so-called "quick counts" by pollsters showed Widodo as much as 11 percentage points ahead.

The vote ended at 1:00 pm (0600 GMT) in Sumatra, although some of the 800,000 polling stations across the volcano-dotted nation remained open late due to delays and long queues.

The quick counts have proven reliable indicators in past elections, but Widodo held off declaring victory.

"We've all seen exit poll and quick count numbers, but we still need to wait for the official results," he told cheering supporters in Jakarta.

His 67-year-old rival — who lost to Widodo in their 2014 presidential contest and warned he would challenge this year's results if he lost — insisted that exit polls suggested he was in the lead. He did not cite specific evidence. "I'm calling on my supporters to keep calm and don't get provoked," he said.

The campaign was punctuated by bitter mudslinging and a slew of fake news online — much of it directed at the presidential contenders. "I hope after this that there will be a call for reconciliation because ... we've been living in a verypolarised atmosphere," political analyst Gun GunHeryanto told Kompas TV.

### Papua to Sumatra

From the jungles of Borneo to the slums of Jakarta, Wednesday saw millions of Indonesians cast their ballots in one of the world's biggest exercises in democracy.

Horses, elephants, motorbikes, boats and planes were pressed into service to get ballot boxes out across the vast country that is home to hundreds of ethnic groups and languages.

More than 190 million voters were asked to choose between the incumbent Widodo and his fiery nationalist rival, who has strong ties to the country's three-decade Suharto dictatorship.

The call to prayer had rang out as voting began at first light in restive Papua province in the east of the 4,800 kilometre-long (3,000 mile) Muslim majority nation.

Leading in pre-vote polls, Widodo, 57, pointed to his ambitious drive to build much-needed roads, airports and other infrastructure across Southeast Asia's largest economy.

But Widodo, a political outsider with an everyman personality when he swept to victory in 2014, has seen his rights record criticised owing to an uptick in discriminatory attacks on religious and other minorities.

His choice of conservative cleric Ma'ruf Amin as his running mate also raised fears about the future of Indonesia's reputation for moderate Islam.—AFP ■

# Singapore's Changi Airport opens mega mall, boosting air hub status

SINGAPORE — Singapore's Changi Airport on Wednesday opened a S$1.7 billion (about $1.26 billion) retail and nature-themed complex that aims to give it a competitive edge as an air hub in the region.

The 135,700 square metre, 10-story complex, named Jewel Changi Airport, offers 280 retail and food outlets as well as a hotel and is linked to Changi's Terminals 1, 2 and 3.

It is more than just a shopping mall as it houses the world's largest man-made indoor waterfall, surrounded by a lush artificially created rainforest to give shoppers a unique combination of both retail experience and leisure. Standing 40 metres tall, the gigantic circular water feature has become the main attraction for visitors with its water plunging from a height of about seven stories from an oculus in the huge glass roof of the building. The climate around the waterfall is controlled to appear cool and misty.

The complex, designed by world-renowned architect Moshe Safdie, is aimed at turning the airport into a tourist destination and attracting more transit visitors.

Taking advantage of Singapore's abundant rainfall all-year round, the waterfall uses rainwater that has been funneled into it, with the water also diverted for irrigation of indoor plants.

Japanese firms have carved out a presence at the mall, with cosmetics giant Shiseido Co. having secured the naming rights for the indoor forest around the waterfall. Shiseido Forest Valley has more than 900 trees and palms and about 60,000 shrubs spread over a 4-storey incline.

Pokemon Center Singapore, the first shop outside Japan dedicated to selling merchandise related to the popular video game, is also there, in addition to fashion accessory maker Motherhouse Co. and lifestyle retailers Tokyu Hands Inc. and RyohinKeikaku Co, provider of Muji brand products. Sabrina Stefani, 33, who visited the complex during a pre-opening preview last week, described the expansion as breathtaking.

"Singapore is always trying to be in the forefront of technology and has its own definition for airports. This is not just an airport but is really like a masterpiece in architecture, and in greenery and landscape," she said. Changi Airport was voted by air travelers as the world's best airport for the seventh consecutive year this year, with Tokyo's Haneda airport in second place and South Korea's Incheon International Airport coming third.

It is the world's seventh busiest airport for international traffic, with a record 65.6 million passengers passing through last year.—Kyodo News ■

Photo shows a man-made indoor waterfall in Singapore's Jewel Changi Airport. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

# Thunderstorms kill 35, leave widespread damage in India

NEW DELHI — Thunderstorms swept across western India killing at least 35 people and leaving widespread damage, officials said on Wednesday (April 17).

Strong winds barrelled through Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh states felling walls, trees and electricity lines. The storms have also been blamed for at least 25 deaths in Pakistan this week.

At least 10 people were killed in the desert state of Rajasthan, where a wall of dust swept over several cities. Another 10 were killed in neighbouring Gujarat and 15 in the central state of Madhya Pradesh, state emergency services told AFP. Officials said victims were hit by lightning, falling trees or electrocuted by power lines. Strong winds and sudden rains also hit the capital, New Delhi, bringing searing summer temperatures down by 10 deg C.The storms forced the cancellation of several political rallies as India's national election gathers pace. The wind blew away a tent that was to have been used for a rally by Prime Minister NarendraModi at Himmatnagar in Gujarat. More than 125 people were killed in a wave of storms that battered northern Indian states in May last year. Lightning kills thousands in India every year, mostly farmers working in fields.—AFP ■

# Myanmar U-15, U-18 teams leave for Hong Kong to compete in Jockey Club International Youth Invitational Football Tournament 2019

THE Myanmar U-15 and U-18 football teams left for Hong Kong yesterday to compete in the Jockey Club International Youth Invitational Football Tournament 2019, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

Twenty players have been selected for the tour from each of the U-18 and U-15 football teams, and are being accompanied by their respective managers and coaches. The chief coach of the U-18 team is U Soe Myat Min, while the chief coach of the U-15 team is Mr. Cocartar Kuma.

Host Hong Kong, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Malaysia, and Singapore will take part in the U-18 Jockey Club International Youth Invitational Football Tournament 2019, while host Hong Kong, Myanmar, Malaysia, and Singapore will compete in the U-15 tournament.

The Myanmar U-18 team will take on the Hong Kong U-18 team at 8.30 a.m. local time on 19 April, while the U-15 football team will compete against the Hong Kong U-15 at 1p.m. the same day.

On 20 April, the Myanmar U-18 will compete against the Viet Nam U-18 at 8.30 a.m., while the U-15 team will play against the Malaysian U-15 at 1p.m.

On 22 April, the Myanmar U-18 will play against the Singapore U-18 at 8.30a.m., while the U-15 team will play against the Singapore team at 1p.m.

Myanmar U-18 football team poses for a group photo at Yangon International Airport yesterday before leaving for Hong Kong . **PHOTO: MFF**

The Jockey Club International Youth Invitational Football Tournament 2019 will be held in Hong Kong from 19 to 22 April. — Kyaw Zin Tun

# Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing wins CAA Women's Golf Championship USA 2019

Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing holds the award to the single competition segment for CAA Women's Golf Championship USA 2019 **PHOTO: MFF**

Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing won the CAA Women's Golf Championship USA 2019, which was held from 12 to 14 April in the United States.

She is a student studying at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) in North Carolina, USA.

Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing's UNCW team won the championship in the team competition segment.

She also took away the championship in the single competition segment.

Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing represented UNCW as well as Myanmar in the CAA championship. — Phoe Thaw Zin

*(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)*

# Ronaldo not enough as Juventus crash out to Ajax young guns

TURIN (Italy)—Even Cristiano Ronaldo was not enough for Juventus to end their 23-year wait for the European title as they crashed out in the Champions League quarter-finals for a second consecutive year.

Juventus splashed out 100 million euros ($117 million) on the five-time Champions League winner last summer and the Portuguese star headed in his 126th Champions League goal to put the home team in front on Tuesday.

But a devastating young Ajax team, spearheaded by 19-year-old defender Matthijs De Ligt, ran riot in the second half in Turin to seal a famous 3-2 aggregate victory.

"Apocalypse," read the headline in daily Corriere dello sport, as Juventus shares plunged 15 percent on Wednesday on the Milan stock exchange.

"Not even a huge investment like Ronaldo was enough to win a title that Juve have been searching for since 1996," the sports daily added.

Juventus have lost five times in the final since 1996 when they won their last title, at the expense of Ajax.

Ronaldo was bought to change that and was handed an annual salary of 31 million euros. He has won the title five times and scored a 97th-minute penalty for Real Madrid against Juventus last season in the quarter-finals.Coach Massimiliano Allegri said he had no regrets, blaming injuries for the team's failure to progress."Football isn't maths," said Allegri.

"Ronaldo gave us a lot during the season. We signed him to increase our chances of winning the Champions League, but in football one plus one does not always make two, it can also be either six or zero.

"I have always said that you have to arrive at the right time in the best condition, when you reach the quarter-final, you need every player."We've been in a bit of an emergency situation for a while and that can only be sustained for so long."We were missing four or five players."

## End of Ronaldo era

For the first time since 2010, Ronaldo will not be in the Champions League semi-finals.

And he held his head in his hands in despair as he slumped to the pitch at the Allianz Stadium.

He had single-handedly lifted Juventus into the quarter-final with a stunning hat-trick in the second leg against Atletico Madrid.

But he was unable to lift his team to a Champions League title he had won in the three previous seasons and in 2014 with Real Madrid, as well as with Manchester United 11 years ago. He holds the record for Champions League goals with 126. That total includes 65 goals in the knockout rounds, another record. Rival Lionel Messi is second on 110 goals after his double for Barcelona against Manchester United on Tuesday.

"Ajax deserved to qualify and you saw that on the pitch," said Juventus president Andrea Agnelli, who said Allegri would be continuing as coach.

Ironically Agnelli—who is also president of the European Clubs Association (ECA) -- is the driving force behind moves to change the Champions League and make it even harder for teams from smaller countries, like Ajax, to qualify.

Agnelli, 43, stressed that the team was growing.

"For our part, we are aware of having been in the Champions League quarter-finals for five or six years and are proud to continue this path," said Agnelli.

Although Juventus are on course to seal an eighth consecutive Serie A title next weekend, they are out of the Coppa Italia, which they had won the four previous seasons. —AFP ■