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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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President U Win Myint accepts the Letters of Credence presented by Mr Jean-Paul Senninger, the newly-accredited Ambassador of Grand Ducy of Luxembourg. **PHOTO: MNA**

President accepts credentials from Ambassador of Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

MR JEAN-PAUL SENNINGER, the newly-accredited Ambassador of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, presented his Letters of Credence to U Win Myint, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, at 10:00 a.m. yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

Present on the occasion were U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation and Director-General U Min Thein of the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the opening address at the ceremony to mark the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor attends Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 celebration

STATE COUNSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended a ceremony to mark the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019, held at the Thingaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The artistes from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture performed with Myanmar songs, traditional dances from Mekong region countries and Japan and a group dance to honor Mekong-Japan exchange. The State Counsellor presented a floral gift basket to the performers.

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JMC briefing explains role of civilians in nation's peace efforts

Flood Warning

According to the 4:30 pm MST observation by the Meteorology and Hydrology Department yesterday, the water level of the Thanlwin River in Hpa-an is observed as about (½) foot below its danger level. It may reach its danger level today.

The weather bureau advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas at Hpa-an Township to remain on the alert for floods and to take precaution measure.—DMH

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw discusses workers' rights, ethnic population, groups

THE tenth-day meeting of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 13th regular session was held yesterday with MPs first discussing the motion tabled by MP U Maung Myint of Mingin constituency urging the Union government to ensure Myanmar workers receive full labour rights while working abroad and setting plans for the emergence of a labour intensive industry.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat. **PHOTO: MNA**

Motion dismissed by assembly

MP U Tin Aye of Metmung constituency seconded the motion, saying that the government needs to enact concrete policies, measures and projects to ensure long-term benefits of it citizens working both home and abroad as this duty is clearly defined in Sections 24 and 31 in the first chapter of the Constitution.

MP U Sai Tun Sein of Mongpyin constituency said the government is tasked with providing suitable compensation for domestic workers as well. He agreed with the fact to enact policies and laws to boost the national economy and employment opportunities. U Sai Tun Sein said that since Myanmar is working towards establishing itself as a democratic nation, there should be ample calls for employment at home, sufficient benefits corresponding with work undertaken, a measure of safety for Myanmar workers abroad and adequate protection for their livelihoods.

The motion was then further debated by nine Hluttaw representatives before hearing a response from the Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population, U Thein Swe, who said the Union government is working seriously towards the goals outlined in the motion, and thus, asked for it to be put on record.

The Speaker called for a vote on the motion due to the differing opinions between its mover and the respective ministry. With the majority of the Hluttaw turning down the motion, the Speaker announced that the motion has been put on record.

Procedure to alter town name

Next, MP U Nan Mon Htin of Machanbaw constituency raised a question asking whether the relevant ministry has plans to allow the spelling of 'baw' in 'Machanbaw' to be altered to a higher tone.

Deputy Minister for Office of the Union Government, U Tin Myint, replied that altering the spelling of the place first requires the local general administration department and administrators to survey the opinions of the local residents from the township level to the village level. He said the results of the survey and request to change the name would be submitted through the state cabinet up to the Union government and a decision would then be made on whether to allow the name change.

No plans to categorize ethnic populations in 2014 census

Next, MP U Hla Tun Kyaw of Maungtaw constituency raised a question asking whether there were plans to publish a population census for each ethnic race.

Union Minister U Thein Swe replied that currently there are no plans to categorize the 2014 population census into ethnic races as there were disputes to certain spellings and inclusion of minor ethnicities that have yet to be resolved. He said a possible publication of that nature will be considered if a comprehensive agreement among the ethnic races can be reached.

Pondering on relevance of 135 ethnic races

MP U Saw Tun Mya Aung of Papun constituency raised a question asking whether there were plans to validate that there are 135 ethnic races in Myanmar.

Union Minister U Thein Swe replied that although they have received numerous letters asking for designation as separate ethnic races and the number and spellings of minor ethnic races conflicted with each other during the 2014 population census survey, there are currently no plans to scrutinize whether the 135 ethnic races is still relevant to the present era.

SEE PAGE-10

Amyotha Hluttaw

Amyotha Hluttaw approves proposal to assess quality of private schools

THE Second Amyotha Hluttaw held its 10th day meeting for 13th regular session yesterday, and approved a proposal to make an assessment for the announcement on the quality and credibility of certificates from private schools which are conducting the courses in affiliation with overseas universities or education foundations or in their own curriculum.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. **PHOTO: MNA**

Quality assessment on private schools

U Hla San, MP of Magway Region constituency 1, supported the proposal, saying that while foreign universities and colleges neglected the certificates of Myanmar academic institutions, the potential learners for oversea education should have a guarantee for their investments.

He also asked that the Ministry of Education should officially scrutinize the credibility of certificates issued by the foreign universities or the private schools conducting their own curriculum in affiliation with overseas education organizations.

U Khin Win, MP of Magway Region constituency 2, agreed the proposal, with making remarks that as some students did not get enough exam scores to attend the government universities, they sought to join private universities which allowed for their courses with lower marks than their state-owned counterparts. He also commented these private schools are found to run unofficially with their own course, and the MP suggested that the Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries, the committees concerned and the private education sector need to scrutinize the capacities of private school for registration.

The proposal was also discussed by Daw Shwe Shwe Sein Latt, MP of Bago Region constituency 3 and Naw Hla Hla Soe, MP of Yangon Region constituency 10.

Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun also agreed to approve the proposal, with quoting the Article 54 (A) under the Chapter 10: Quality Assessment and Quality Assurance of Myanmar National Education Law which said "At every level of education there shall be a program of quality assurance."

The deputy minister reaffirmed that the ministry is trying to ensure good education services with the systematic registration of private teachers, and will implement the scrutinizing processes on private schools in coordination with the relevant committees in this sector.

Deputy Minister for Construction answered to asterisk questions

Deputy Minister for Construction gave answers to the asterisk questions of five MPs.

U Maung Maung Latt, MP of Sagaing Region constituency 9, asked for construction of concrete or asphalt road on the inter-village road between Botekan-Malu-Zibyugone in Tamu district of Sagaing Region.

The deputy minister replied that it will be implemented based on the availability of funds from the Sagaing Region government in 2020-2021 fiscal year.

U Si Hu Dwet, MP of Kachin State constituency 2, asked about upgrading the rock road to the tar road at the road section of Shwepyithar-Arrsa-Zone 5- Nan Gwe.

The deputy minister replied that the road will be upgraded to a smooth rock road with the general surplus fund of Kachin State for 2019-2020 fiscal year.

U Lar Min Htan, MP of Chin State constituency 10, asked to widen the inner road of Lai Lin Pi town of Matupi Township in Chin State. U Zon Hlal Htan, MP of Chin State constituency 4 asked about the construction of the remaining road section by the government to connect with the other section that will be constructed with the funds of World Bank for Kalay-Falam-Haka motorway. U Shan Awng, MP of Chin State constituency 2, asked about construction of road between Surkwa town of Haka Township and Hnarein town of Thantlang Township in Haka District, Chin State.

The deputy ministers replied to these queries.

Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than sought approval on the amendment of Pyithu Hluttaw on the Fourth Bill Amending Union Judiciary Law that has been passed by the Amyotha Hluttaw.

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State Counsellor attends Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 celebration

FROM PAGE-1

In delivering a speech, the State Counsellor said that the Mekong-Japan cooperation programme was started in 2007, and she expressed thanks for the assistance of Japan to the underdeveloped countries as the programme was aimed for the development of social and economic sectors in Mekong region countries.

The Tokyo Strategy 2018 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation was adopted for a three-year action plan for cooperation from 2019 to 2022, and the plan would focus on three new main pillars of vibrant and effective connectivity, people-centered society, and realization of a Green Mekong.

It was believed that better understanding, friendship and collaboration among the regional countries would lead to a green environment for each country, region and the world.

The year 2019 was designated as Mekong-Japan Exchange Year. Myanmar would take part in this programme by making a film of the Mekong region, presenting the success stories of Myanmar young entrepreneurs relating to the economy and development of the region, and arts show/contests depicting the beauty of the Mekong region.

The State Counsellor also said that Myanmar really appreciated the role of young entrepreneurs; and as one of the least developed countries in ASEAN, Myanmar needed the role of these young people, as well as their intelligence and creative ideas for the development of the countries. She also remarked that the celebration of the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 was regarded as the recognition for the capability and intelligence of young entrepreneurs, while the world has recognized that the fourth industrial revolution was taking place at present.

She added that although the benefits of this revolution have been spotlighted, its disadvantages should not be ignored, and that while laying more emphasis on the advantages on the one hand, measures should be taken to remove the disadvantages on the other hand.

The State Counsellor also advised that the capacity and the pivotal role of humans should be taken into account in the era of industrial revolution, especially in human relations for sustainable development of the world.

She remarked that an understanding on the needs of others was a very fundamental theory for the success of a business as the production of inessential items would not help the business to thrive, and that the supply needs to meet the demand for the economic development of the country. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also suggested that the partner countries in the region should fulfill the requirements of each other for the gradual development of the whole region.

She reaffirmed that the Myanmar government was putting emphasis on the youth affairs of the country. However, she recognized some deficiencies in the changing trend although the government had taken priority on the capacity building of young people to be able to keep abreast with their regional counterparts although Myanmar was still behind the rest of the other countries in development.

The State Counsellor assured that Myanmar culture was endowed with valuable philosophies and cultural heritage which should be maintained for the improvement and development of the country.

She also said that the competitions of businesses should be friendly, without aggressive manners while supporting each other.

It was delightful that Japan joined the Mekong region countries. Myanmar was receiving encouragement in working parallel with Japan as a developed country.

She also expressed her appreciation for Japan's cooperation at the appropriate time for their friendship and goodwill with a view to fostering the development of other countries.

The State Counsellor also said Myanmar should strive for fostering the development strategies in the Mekong region and empowering the novelty in combination with technology and innovation of the youths in the Mekong region. Thus, the programme of presenting "the Work Schemes of the Emerging Entrepreneurs about the economy and development of the Mekong Region" had been included at the tenth anniversary year of Mekong-Japan.

She also said that consideration of the future was dependent upon the present, and the future depended on the ongoing works. Today's youths were leaders of tomorrow. The emerging countries were aspiring to become developed countries and there was a belief that this could be achieved.

She then urged to make an effective use of grabbing these kinds of opportunities to promote cooperation. There was a need to identify better ways to promote understanding and practical ways cooperation. Progress cannot be obtained from expectation and day-dreaming, but relentless endeavor. It was generally accepted that the progress of Japan after the Second World War was on account of the diligence and industrious of the Japanese people.

She also wished to instill the spirit of learning and sharing obtained from one another like teacher-pupil relationship as well as companionship.

Then the prize-giving ceremony for the youths who won in the international tournament was conducted and the State Counsellor awarded the prize to the MM Tutors Group that won the first prize at the Mekong level and took the third place at the 2019 International Business Model Competitions in the U.S.

Then Union Minister for Home Affairs Let-Gen Kyaw Swe presented the awards to the Yangon Institute of Technology students who stood first at the Robotic Competition 2019 in Tokyo, Japan. Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi presented prizes to the students of the Mandalay University as they won the second place at the first Global Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge Competition 2018 conducted by the Suranaree University of Technology in Thailand.

SEE PAGE-4

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presents award to the team of MM Tutors Group who won the third place at the 2019 International Business Model Competitions in the US. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits the exhibition at the ceremony to mark the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi receives Chinese Special Envoy for Asian Affairs

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with Mr Sun Guoxiang, Special Envoy for Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

DAW AUNG SAN SUU KYI, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Mr Sun Guoxiang, Special Envoy for Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, on 14 August 2019 at 11:15 am at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed matters relating to the recent developments in national reconciliation and peace process, progress on the bilateral consultation with Bangladesh for early commencement of repatriation of the verified displaced persons from Rakhine State and the constructive support extended by China to the Myanmar Government's efforts in this regard. —MNA

State Counsellor receives Ambassadors of Georgia, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg separately

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Mr Jean-Paul Senninger, Ambassador of Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Mr Nikoloz Apkhazava, Ambassador of Georgia, in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, received Mr Nikoloz Apkhazava, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to Myanmar, with residence in Kuala Lumpur at 2 pm yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on matters pertaining to promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation including culture, tourism, transportation and agricultural sectors between Myanmar and Georgia.

The State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs also received Mr Jean-Paul Senninger, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to Myanmar, with residence in Bangkok at 2:45 pm yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on matters pertaining to the promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Luxembourg.—MNA

State Counsellor attends Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 celebration

FROM PAGE-3

The Japanese Ambassador Mr. Ichiro Maruyama presented an award to a student, who grabbed a gold medal at the ASEAN Block Chain technology Competition 2018 in Bali, Indonesia.

Following this, Ma Phu Pwint Eain, a winner from the MM Tutors Group expressed her appreciation on behalf of the winners.

Next, the State Counsellor, union ministers, deputy ministers, ambassadors, Hluttaw committee chairmen, UMFCCI chairman, permanent secretaries, directors-general, deputy directors-general, business personnel, winners and participants posed for commemorative photographs.

The State Counsellor together with attendees at the ceremony looked around the displays, goods and technologies created by the emerging entrepreneurs at the event. The event was attended by the union ministers, deputy ministers, chairmen and members of Hluttaw committees, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar, ambassadors from the Mekong region countries, embassy staff, heads of the regional representatives, chairman and representatives of UMFCCI and its associates, business personnel doing business in Myanmar from Japan and Mekong region countries, SMEs business personnel from regions, states and invited guests.

The programme of Mekong-Japan Exchange Year 2019 was convened and young entrepreneurs from the Mekong region countries shared their experiences and held a roundtable discussion on "Future of Workplace – Opportunities for the entrepreneurs". – MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin+Win Ko Ko Aung)

Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee holds eighth meeting

THE National-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee held its eighth coordination meeting at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Vice President U Myint Swe, as a patron of the Central Committee, delivered a speech at the meeting. In his speech, the Vice President recounted the formation of the National-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee by the order number 35/2016 of Union Government Office dated 2 June 2016. The 25-member committee assigned 26 tasks, and supervised the six working committee, as well as the supervising committes in Nay Pyi Taw Council and the States/Regions.

Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the 8th coordination meeting of the Central Committee on National-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Over the past three year, the Central Committee had already organized seven meetings and made 95 decisions. Out of them, 46 topics have been done and the ongoing 49 topics were divided into 15 points for long-term plans and 34 points for the immediate plans.

He also urged to finalize the ongoing topics as soon as possible.

The Vice President remarked that conservation of natural resources, maintenance of ecosystem and preservation of clean environment were important national duties.

He said that environmental conservation was a wide sector that needed the collaboration of Union level, Nay Pyi Taw Council, state/region levels and district/township levels under the supervisions of the central committees, the working committees and the supervising committees.

Some significant steps of the committee in adopting environmental policy and procedures helped the government to issue 'National Environmental Policy', 'Myanmar Climate Change Policy', 'Myanmar Climate Change Strategy (2018-2030), and 'Myanmar Climate Change Master Plan (2018-2030)'. The 'National Level Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2030)' had been adopted and it would be published soon. It included the pledges and the international norms of practices on environmental and environmental changes suggested by the stakeholders who participated in adopting the policy, the strategy and the master plan.

A road map should be set up based on the policy, strategy and the master plan for implementation in development sectors.

The Myanmar Climate Change Policy said that 'not only the Government of the country, but all institutions, the civil society, the NGOs, the productive forces and sectors, communities and people must contribute to building a resilient country.

Moreover, the National Environmental Policy has called for 'the mainstreaming of environmental protection into planning and decision-making at all levels of government and in all sectors.'

He also said that the committee needed to ensure collaboration in implementing its prioritized plans in the National Environmental Policy, the Myanmar Climate Change Policy, the Myanmar Climate Change Strategy, and the Myanmar Climate Change Master Plan with the master plans of ministries, Nay Pyi Taw Council, States/Regions. The Vice President also reminded the attendees about the tremendous challenges posed by waste materials resulting from the increasing population, urban development and industrial sector. He also said that the lack of a systematic waste management plan has led to random discard of trash on roads, rivers and creeks, causing pollutions of air, soil and water, and resulting in health hazards for the people, social sector and business sectors like tourism industry. Myanmar has adopted the National Level Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2030) for good practices on sustainable waste management system that was based on the improved methods, instead of conventional waste management system, to reduce production of waste materials, recycling and reproducing useful items.

The action plan was being carried out in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay in collaboration with international organizations, and that the state/regional governments were urged to implement the goals in the plan. The problems that needed to be addressed immediately were air pollution and the plastic wastes, and the main themes for the World Environment Day for 2018 and 2019 were 'beat plastic pollution' and 'Air Pollution' to raise the awareness of global people about the increasing issues of plastic and air pollutions to be addressed in prompt actions.

He also pointed out that drainage systems were blocked with waste materials during the rainy season, causing floods due to the lack of unsystematic waste disposals, and he asked to reduce the use of plastic bags, to recycle the waste products, to attract more investments in this sector, to conduct educative programmes, to take legal actions and to adopt laws, procedures and rules and to control these products.

> ... the main themes for the World Environment Day for 2018 and 2019 were 'beat plastic pollution' and 'Air Pollution' to raise the awareness of global people about the increasing issues of plastic and air pollutions.

According to the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – (IPCC) released in October, 2018, it was found out that the renewable energy resources which release low carbon were being used abundantly. Due to global warming, the sea level has risen at the end of the 21st century. Some experts had already calculated that some coastal cities and nations would go underwater.

Therefore it was needed to keep a close watch on the challenges of environmental and climate changes that occur day by day and what should be done in cooperation with the international community. As for Myanmar, emphasis should be placed to make preliminary arrangements for the coastal cities that may sink underwater due to the sea level rise. Thus efforts should be exerted to lay down the long-term schemes aiming to increase the use of renewable energy in cooperation with INGOs. All in all, when it came to carrying out the implementation of sustainable and balanced development schemes adopted by the Union Government, some major implementation processes covered environmental conservation, curbing climate change, adapting to climate change, climate resistance and natural hazards mitigation. The ministries, the Nay Pyi Taw Council and regions/states governments were urged to draw up long-term and short-term projects so that the implementation process could be conducted. By doing so, environmental deterioration could be avoided while reducing the impacts of climate change.

SEE PAGE-13

Vice President U Henry Van Thio reviews tours to disaster-torn areas

VICE President U Henry Van Thio presided over a meeting yesterday to review the findings during his tours to the disaster-affected areas from 10 to 12 August.

The meeting was held at the Emergency Management Center in the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, U Henry Van Thio, in his capacity as the Chairman of National Disaster Management Committee, invited discussions about the ongoing situation of floods and landslides, damages and rehabilitation works.

Since the last week of June, floods occurred in 12 states/regions, and the disasters are still taking places in Bago, Mon, Kayin and Thaninthayi, with the remaining 166 rescue camps for 79,389 victims up to 13rd August.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio delivers the speech at the meeting to review of tours to the disaster-affected areas from 10 to 12 August in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

The flash floods this year occurred after heavy rains and rising river waters. The incidents began in the upper Myanmar regions, and continued to central Myanmar before reaching lower Myanmar. The states and regional governments took preventive and emergency response measures with the help of ministries.

However, the landslides after torrential rains caused deaths and injuries in Yebyagone village of Thal Byu Gone village-tract of Paung Township in Mon State. Some infrastructural damages happened in Mon, Kayin and Thaninthayi. The incidents have pointed out the need for making advance preparations for the possible landslides, in addition to road damages, due to floods.

He also called for data collections ahead of rehabilitation works, and seeking the assistance from local and international organizations, as well as from the private donors.

The Vice President also invited the attendees to present new and better ideas in emergency responses and rehabilitation works based on previous experiences.

He also suggested to investigate the recent landslide at Malatt Mountain in Paung Township of Mon State, and to identify preventive measures for future cases with the cooperation of experts and contributions of technical and financial assistance as it was necessary to prevent loss of lives.

A total of 65 bodies have been found up to 9 pm on 13 August, and the geologists from the Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department are providing technical assistance in conducting surveys at the six places and landslide-prone areas by using modern equipment beginning 13 August morning.

U Henry Van Thio also sought advice in preparing for rehabilitation works, collaboration, rehearsals for unexpected natural disasters and educational programmes for public.

SEE PAGE-14

VP U Henry Van Thio attends donation ceremony for rehabilitation of flood-hit areas

Vice President U Henry Van Thio accepts cash donation for rehabilitation in flood-affected areas from donors at the donation ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

VICE President U Henry Van Thio attended a ceremony to donate cash for rehabilitation of the flood-hit areas by business persons in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the ceremony held at the Presidential Palace, the vice president, who is also the Chairman of the National Disaster Management Committee, accepted K50 million donated by members of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

On behalf of flood victims and the National Disaster Management Committee, the Committee's Chairman Vice President U Henry Van Thio expressed thanks to the donors for their contributions to the rehabilitation of the flood-hit areas.

Speaking at the event, Vice President U Henry Van Thio said the world was experiencing climate change induced natural disasters. Likewise, Myanmar was also experiencing floods.

He expressed his appreciation to the donors saying that their contribution to the flood victims reflected the fact that Myanmar was the most generous country in the world.

At the ceremony, U Ye Min Aung, the vice-president of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry- UMFCCI, explained about the purpose of the donation. Afterwards, Vice President U Henry Van Thio accepted the cash donation presented by UMFCCI President U Zaw Min Win and members and presented a certificate of honour to them.

The Vice President then handed over K 1.5 million donated by Shine Hill Co, Ltd to the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) Vice Chairman Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye.

Also present at the ceremony were Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, Deputy Ministers U Soe Aung and U Hla Maw Oo, Permanent Secretaries, UMFCCI's President, vice-presidents, members and officials.—MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Correction

Please read "**displaced people**" instead of "**displaced local ethnic people**," in the first column of the news story entitled "Deputy Construction Minister inspects returnee camps in Maungtaw" on page-6 of August 13 Issue of *the Global New Light of Myanmar*.— MNA

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee holds meeting

PYIDAUNGSU Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee held a meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday discussing the 2019 Union Tax Bill sent from the Union Government.

The meeting was attended by U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Chairman of the Joint Bill Committee and the Joint Public Accounts Committee, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win, Vice Chairmen, Secretaries, Joint Secretary and members of the Joint Bill Committee and Joint Public Accounts Committee, members of the Pyithu Hluttaw Banks and Monetary Affairs Development Committee, officials of the Office of the Union Government, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Union Attorney-General Office, business personals of the Republic of theUnion of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and officials of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.—MNA ■

(Translated by GNLM)

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein addresses the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat shakes hands with Georgian Ambassador Mr Nikoloz Apkhazava in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat receives Georgian Ambassador

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received Georgian Ambassador Mr Nikoloz Apkhazava at the meeting hall of Pyithu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed matters related to promotion of friendship between the two nations' governments, parliaments and peoples, and the establishment of Myanmar-Georgia Inter-parliamentary Friendship Association.—MNA ■

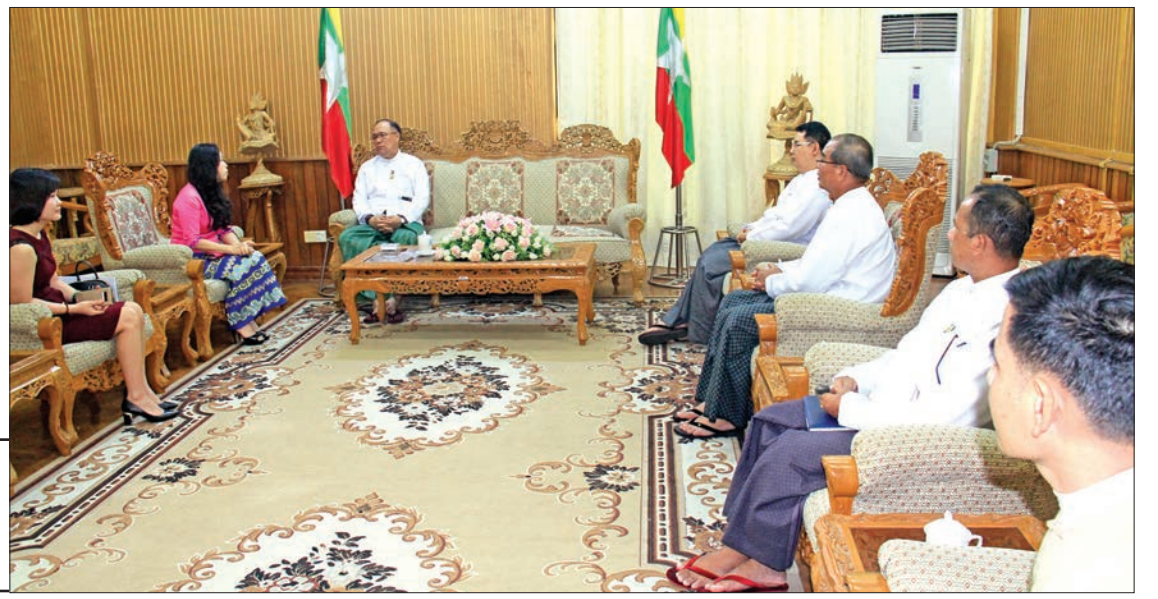
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung receives Ambassador of Viet Nam

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung received Ambassador of Viet Nam Dr Luan Thuy Duong yesterday at his office in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to the condition of TC Dragon tugboat that pulled the Oil Rig Platform "Sea Hawk" which accidently sank in the sea between Pathien Mipya and Preparis Island. —MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung meets with Vietnamese Ambassador Dr Luan Thuy Duong in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister U Thein Swe holds a meeting with Indian Ambassador Mr Saurabh Kumar at the Office of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister U Thein Swe holds talks with Indian Ambassador

UNION Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe received Indian Ambassador Mr Saurabh Kumar and party in the meeting hall of the ministry's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, they cordially discussed matters related to on-going process of UID System jointly conducted by Myanmar and India, opening of the International Gate at Tamu-Moeyay border gate between Myanmar and India, dealing with current difficulties faced to enter Myanmar with ease through the channels of the ministries of Foreign Affairs from two countries regarding the OCI passport issued by the India, bilateral affairs of immigration and relations.— MNA ■

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)

We should begin adapting plans for climate change

CLIMATE change has brought numerous forms of natural disasters upon all the countries of the world. Both the citizens and governments of these nations are suffering losses in innocent lives and from an economic standpoint. Unfortunately, now that these natural disasters are becoming more commonplace, the human race would not fare well if they occur every year. The entire world must unite to find sustainable solutions to reduce and prevent them.

Recent natural disasters in Myanmar have occurred in the form of heavy rains, floods and landslides from the resulting soil erosion. The situation is dire with casualties and deaths reaching high numbers albeit humanitarian aid coming in from all corners of the nation.

But the heavy rains have now dwindled and a lack of rain can be equally disastrous. One need only look at drought-stricken areas during the rainy season to see the state of seriousness.

Weather experts have forecasted that the monsoon will be late to enter Myanmar this year and leave earlier still. There is no reason for the rainfall to exceed annual levels but climate change can cause flash floods or droughts. We must be prepared for either scenario just in case.

With recent events transpiring, we may be led to believe that this rainy season has seen a vast amount of downpour but the truth is our dams don't have enough rainwater and are in fact receiving less than what they did the same time in the previous year.

> There needs to be adequate prior planning and safety measures in place to prevent unnecessary loss of lives and homes to natural disasters. It should be a national responsibility for every citizen to be aware of the symbiotic relationship between the forests and the natural environment and everyone's duty to preserve them.

If the monsoon were to truly leave early then it would cause complications for agriculture and drinking water. Heavy rains have impacted some areas of Myanmar but there are also regions with little or next to no rainfall at all.

Hence, we must begin rationing the drinking water and irrigation water we currently have in anticipation of the possible drought. Authorities should help plan for regions receiving sufficient water for proper storage and have them possibly share it with areas that might not have any rain. They should address this problem by educating and collaborating with local residents and farmers.

Now, more than ever, is the time for the entire world to stand together to reverse climate change before it becomes irreversible. And the main contribution we must all focus on is reforesting the lost acres of trees cut down over the years. They are the missing link between environmental conservation and soil preservation, to regulating the weather at bearable degrees.

We must enact a plan to replant trees every year and save our earth and all living things on it, including ourselves and our future generations.

We would do well to embed the disastrous effects of climate change we are facing now as lessons learnt in our hearts. There needs to be adequate prior planning and safety measures in place to prevent unnecessary loss of lives and homes to natural disasters. It should be a national responsibility for every citizen to be aware of the symbiotic relationship between the forests and the natural environment and everyone's duty to preserve them.

Lot-casting to solve food shortage

By Dr Khin Maung Nyunt
(Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja, Sithu)

WAKHAUNG, the 5th month of the Myanmar Lunar Calendar approximately corresponds to August. The literal meaning of Wakhaung is the middle of Wa [Rain Retreat of three months of Monsoon]. In stone inscriptions of old days this month is mentioned as Nan Kala [နံကာလ] meaning ploughing season or the month for agricultural activities. A Myanmar folk rhyme ဝါဆို၊ ဝါခေါင် ရေဖောင်းဟောင် [In Waso and Wakhaung, there are billows of rain water]. Being the peak of rainy season, the entire country is inundated with rain water.

Astrologically named Simha [သိဟ်] Leo its symbol is Lion. A species of ground lily called khattar [crinum amoenum] blooms profusely to be designated as the flower of this month. The origin and history of the lot casting festival of Wakhaung may be traced to the lifetime of Lord Gotama Buddha. While residing at the Weiluwun Vihara at the capital of Yazagyoe, a famine hit the city. There was a shortage of food. Not enough rice food could be provided for all monks. When this matter was reported to Lord Buddha himself expounded seven different ways of providing food for the monks. They are as follows—

(1). Sangha bhat - food offered to all monks
(2). Uddesa bhat - food offered to one or two monks.
(3). Vimantana bhat - food offered to the invited monks.
(4). Salaka bhat – food offered to monks chosen by casting lots.
(5). Pakkhika bhat – food offered to monks on the waxing and waning moon days.
(6). Uposathika bhat – food offered to monks on Sabbath days.
(7). Patipadika bhat – food offered to monks on the day after the Sabath day.

Lord Buddha approved all above seven types of food offering to the monks. Since that time Salka bhat – food offered to monks chosen by casting lots became a common practice. As directed by Lord Buddha, one monk was chosen by monks from among them to be appointed as "Bhattuddesaka" to take the charge of offering food to monks chosen by lot casting. This monk must have the following special qualifications.

(1). Good health
(2). Activeness
(3). Managerial skill
(4). Freedom from bias and prejudice
(5). The ability to keep the correct list of allotted and unallotted monks.

> It was Myanmar kings who prescribed the lot-casting festival in Wakhaung because three months of Rain Retreat used to have food shortage for monks.

The Myanmar Posts of the Ministry of Transport and Communications has issued a special commemorative stamp to mark the month of Wakhaung.

Traditional large bowls with stand and cover of lacquer for offering of food to monks. Food offered to monks chosen by casting lots became a common tradition in Myanmar. **PHOTO: MDN**

The first monk chosen for that charge in the lifetime of Lord Buddha was the son of the Malla King Ashin Maha Thera Datba. He discharged the duty of allotting Uddesa-bhat, Nimanta bhat and Salaka bhat with fairness and correctness.

It was Myanmar kings who prescribed the lot casting festival in Wakhaung because three months of Rain Retreat used to have a food shortage for monks. Later not only food but also other offertories for monks is offered by lot casting including monastery. In Myanmar language lot-casting is called sarye-tan pwe [စာရေးတံပွဲ]. It is not offering stationeries-slates, slate pencils, books, pens, ball pens and ink, etc. as some Myanmar people of today especially young generations mistakenly think. In some rural monasteries you can still find lot-casting festivals and pieces of bamboo sticks in a bamboo tube for lot casting.

In the stone inscriptions of Ancient Bagan offering food to monks by casting lots was mentioned. In lines 22 and 23 of Saw Hla Win Pagoda Stone Inscription of AD 1268, 1290, 1291. In the Pinya Period of Myanmar history [1298-1312 AD] King Thihathu [1298-1312 AD] donated 5 storey gilt wooden monastery to Hsu-twin-pyit Sayadaw monk by lot-casting. Myanmar literature is rich in the forms of diverse Verses and poems describing Sayetan pwe [lot casting festivals] of Wakhaung month loota, eh-chin, Lay-cho, Tay htat verses of authers U Yar, Pho Thudaw U Min, Lu U Min, Min Khwey, U Ponnya etc, described about Lot-casting festivals in their literary pieces. In Myanmar music and songs of classical lot-casting festivals were sung and re-enacted.

At such monthly festivals, festive atmosphere is created by Myanmar people of all age groups. Elderly Myanmars are in religious mood-keeping Sabbath, reciting Paritta, groups. Elderly Myanmar are in religious mood-keeping Sabbath, reciting Paritta, meditating, donating middle and young age groups turn to festive activities-singing, dancing, re-enacting. Amature performing artists of the localities joyfully participate in such festivals. Village girls and ladies lead the procession. They are in their fineries, different chair knot styles, sanakha face make-up bright beautiful dresses holding artistically arranged flowers and other offertories accompanied by their parents. The procession followed by bands of local male youths overjoyed, play percussion and wind instruments—flute, oboe,drums cymbals and bamboo clappers, singing folk, or pop songs and dancing youthful demces such as Ozi, Dho bat, Naban Zan dances or ultra-modern pop and hip-hops. They make everyone happy or even merry like them. Some watchers of middle or old age group join them. These village amateur performers receive money award from the watchers, even from some monks.

The writer of this article in his younger days at school, college and even state scholar in London, never failed to participate in such festivals. He received money award for his Ozi, Dho bat and Naban san dances. Myanmar monthly festivals are traditional, religious, socio-cultural and international regardless of race, religion, creed and social status any one friend or stranger can join in eating, drinking and all merry-makings.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 14th August, 2019)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is moderate over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 15 August, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway regions and widespread in the remaining regions and states with isolated heavyfalls in Yangon Region, Kachin, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (6 –8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Moderate monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15 August, 2019: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15 August, 2019: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15 August, 2019: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

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

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JMC briefing explains role of civilians in nation's peace efforts

Joint Monitoring Committee members U Ko Ko Gyi, Thura U Bo Ni and Rev Saw Matthew Aye explain civilian representation and their roles in the overall peace process of the nation. **PHOTO: PE ZAW**

CIVILIAN representatives who are involved in the different levels of the Joint Monitoring Committee on Ceasefire (JMC) explained their progress during a briefing organized at Lotte Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

U Ko Ko Gyi's speech

Firstly, U Ko Ko Gyi, Vice-Chairman 2 of the JMC-U, said it is a significant factor that armed conflicts between the signatories of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) are almost non-existent in the four years since the JMC's establishment.

He added that the local residents of those signatories are also enjoying peace to a certain extent. He also said the committee members on different levels of the JMC have managed to build strong trust between themselves and that they need to strive to maintain and further promote it.

Attendees were given the opportunity to ask for clarification on different topics in yesterday's briefing while also receiving explanations on the JMC's progress so far. In addition, U Ko Ko Gyi welcomed constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement on their work.

He said the JMC faced various challenges when it was first formed as the government administration was changing and they had to deal with financial hurdles and lack of skilled human resource.

But the JMC was able to overcome these challenges together while being the first joint organization to work towards resolving armed conflicts, said U Ko Ko Gyi. He added that the JMC will continue to exist until Myanmar achieves lasting peace and urged all members to work towards sustainable solutions.

Updating reports on JMC

Next, JMC-U civilian representative member Thura U Bo Ni explained the committee's objectives, policies, progress and implementations on various sectors, and how it designs its directives and regulations.

Following this, fellow member Rev Saw Matthew Aye explained the civilian representatives' roles in the different levels of the JMC, how female civilian representatives are involved in JMC-S, the reason, fundamental principles, duties and authority of civilian representatives, and various facts of Local Civilians Monitoring (LCM) groups.

After this, U Ko Ko Gyi explained the monitoring, reviewing, verifying and conflict resolving processes the JMC has undertaken. He also explained the status if the JMC-S and JMC-L committees, the plenary meetings held so far, replying to complaints received, peace observation trips abroad, and other events organized to further the purpose of JMC.

Next, U Ko Ko Gyi, Thura U Bo Ni and Rev Saw Matthew Aye answered to questions raised by attendees and JMC-U Secretary 1 Dr Shwe Kah provided additional explanations.

Afterwards, JMC-S (Shan) civilian representative U Aung Soe Moe said their monthly meetings are currently suspended as the RCSS has been postponed for the majority of 2019. However, he said informal civilian meetings still took place and so did meetings and JMC training courses. He said the suspended groups are growing more likely to participate in the formal JMC meetings and he views this as a blossoming situation.

Next, JMC-S (Kayin) civilian representative Nan Sei Hua said they regularly visit villages in Kayin State to explain about the work done by the JMC in order for troops from both sides to clearly understand the ethnics to maintain and for local residents to gain a better awareness of the overall situation. However, she said there were no more opportunities for cooperation after the delay was announced. Despite this, they will continue to provide the necessary training to teachers and personnel from the education department in order to conduct more public meetings, said Nan Sei Hua.

Also attending the meeting were Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun and regional lawmakers, officials from the regional government, JMC-U Secretary 2 Col. Wunna Aung, civilian representative from different levels of the JMC and its technical support groups, NRPC officials, diplomats, UN officials, members of Myanmar Military Veterans, officials from the GAD' training institutions, departmental officials, teachers and students from regional universities, CSO officials, enthusiasts, observers and invited guests.—Zaw Gyi ■

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Pyithu Hluttaw discusses workers' rights, ethnic population, groups

FROM PAGE-2

Following this, the Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw and Deputy Minister U Tin Myint replied to additional questions raised by MPs.

The Speaker then announced they have received the Education, Research, Planning and Training Bill sent back with amendments from the Amyotha Hluttaw and called for MPs interested in submitting an amendment proposal to register their names.

The 11th-day meeting of the current session of the Pyithu Hluttaw will be held 16 August. — Mawsi, Mhwe Kyu Zin ■ *(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

Amyotha Hluttaw approves proposal to assess quality of private schools

FROM PAGE-2

Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than informed the parliament about the acceptance of New Plant Species Protection Bill sent by the Pyithu Hluttaw with amendments.

The Speaker invited the list of MP names who want to discuss the bill.

The bill on fish-breeding was discussed by MP of Thanintharyi Region constituency 8 U Okka Min, MP of Bago Region constituency 11 Dr Win Myint, MP of Thanintharyi Region constituency 7 U Zaw Hein, MP of Thanintharyi Region constituency 12 U Khin Myo Win, and MP of Kachin State constituency 11 Dr Khun Win Thaung.

The 11th day meeting for 13th regular session of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw will be convened on 16 August. —Aung Ye Thwein and Lu Maw ■ *(Translated by Aung Khin)*

Tatmadaw urges NCA non-signatories to take part in peace process during ceasefire

THE Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services issued an announcement yesterday urging ethnic armed groups to take part in peace negotiations without hesitation, as the Tatmadaw has extended its unilateral ceasefire till 31 August to aid the peace process.

According to the announcement, the Tatmadaw declared unilateral ceasefire on 21 December, 2018, in keeping with the expectations of the ethnic people for taking the right path to democracy, for progress and socio-economic development, and so that ethnic armed organizations which have not yet signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement can conduct peace negotiations without outside pressure.

Unilateral ceasefire was first declared from 21 December, 2018 to 30 April, 2019, and it was extended from 1 May to 30 June, and then from 1 July to 31 August, with the Tatmadaw ceasing all operations in the Northern, North-Eastern, Eastern, Eastern Central, and Triangle Region commands.

However, the Tatmadaw stated, there have been some weaknesses in the implementation of the peace-making process, including negotiations, during the ceasefire period, and the extended ceasefire is going to end soon.

In its statement, the Tatmadaw urged individuals and organizations involved in the peace-making process to take the process forward by engaging with the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and the peace negotiation team set up by the Tatmadaw with confidence, and to make concerted efforts in the interests of the ethnic people. —MNA ■

(Translated by GNLM)

S-Shan State tea leaf growers earn healthy profit from high demand

TEA leaf growers in Southern Shan State are doing well financially due to a high demand for tea leaves.

Southern Shan State is the main producer of tea leaves, which are grown in Kalaw, Ywangan, and Pindaya townships of the state. Fresh tea leaves fetch K1,500-2,500 per viss (1.6 kg), while the prices of dried tea leaves range from K5,500-7,000 per viss. They are primarily sent to Pyay, Pyinmana, Tatkon, Mandalay, and Myingyan towns, said U Sein Win, a grower from Kalaw.

"Both demand and prices are higher than before. The demand for fresh tea leaves has grown. We are delivering them to Pindaya and Aungpan towns," said a grower from Dayein village from Pindaya Township.

In addition, Myanmar's tea leaves are shipped to Japan, South Korea, Singapore, China (Taipei), Germany, the US, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Australia, and China. "Exporters are preferring organic dried tea leaves, hoping to create a potential market. Yields of organic farms can be lower than in conventional agriculture. Moreover, local consumption is high. Only a small volume can be exported to foreign markets," said a tea leaf grower from Taunggyi Township. At present, green tea leaves, organic dried tea leaves, ready-made packaged tea, fresh tea leaves, and an assortment of crispy beans are being exported. —Tin Zar Hlaing/ Htet Myat ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

Women picking the tea at a tea plantation in Southern Shan State. **PHOTO: AUNG THU**

Lower imports drag down trade deficit in current fiscal

A FALL in imports in the last ten months of the current fiscal year has helped narrow Myanmar's trade deficit to US$1.1 billion, which is a significant drop from a deficit of $2.8 billion registered in the corresponding period of the 2017-2018FY, according to data from the Commerce Ministry.

A cargo ship loading containers at a shipping container port in Yangon. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Between 1 October, 2018 and 2 August, 2019, Myanmar's external trade plunged to $29.43 billion from $29.54 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

In the current fiscal, exports were pegged at $14.16 billion and imports were valued at $15.27 billion. Compared to the previous fiscal, exports have increased by $757.9 million, while imports have fallen by $901.87 million. Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, CMP raw materials, and consumer goods.

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

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

External trade this year is targeted to reach $31 billion, and the deficit is expected to be around $500 million. But, there are only two months left in the FY.

Myanmar's trade deficit was pegged at $1.3 billion in the last mini-budget period, $3.9 billion in the 2017-2018FY, $5.3 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and $5.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY, according to statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization.—Mon Mon ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

IFC, Myanmar Citizens Bank sign agreement to transform banking

THE International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, signed an agreement with the Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB) that will increase access to finance for businesses, smaller enterprises and individuals.

Under the agreement, IFC will provide advice to MCB to undertake a project to transform its business operations, creating a secure foundation that will help support future prosperity in Myanmar.

The project will be delivered over two years and will focus on optimizing products and channels; improving branch and sales networks; optimizing credit and risk management strategies as well as streamlining organizational management.

"Successfully implementing this transformation project will significantly strengthen our SME and retail banking segments and will help thousands of businesses in Myanmar gain access to better banking," said U Toe Aung Myint, Chairman of MCB.

According to Findex in 2017 it was estimated that only around 26 percent of adults in Myanmar have an account at a financial institution. For businesses, just 7 percent of small and medium enterprises have a line of credit or loan, and 56 percent of enterprises in Myanmar do not have a savings or checking account (UNCDF 2018).

"Emerging from the long-term banking restrictions, smaller domestic banks in Myanmar operate in a challenging environment. The nation's banking sector is now one of the least developed in the region," said Vikram Kumar, IFC Country Manager for Myanmar. "Complementing the government's banking reforms over the past few years, IFC and MCB are building to a more stable and robust banking environment, which will increase investor confidence in Myanmar."

By increasing MCB's ability to better serve SMEs, IFC will contribute to the increasing access to finance, accelerating much needed growth of credit to Myanmar's expanding private sector, particularly for smaller businesses.—GNLM ■

Feasibility study under way for fish auction market in Dala Township

By Nyein Nyein

A feasibility study is being conducted for setting up a fish auction market in Dala Township, said U Phyo Min Thein, the Yangon Region Chief Minister, during a press conference held at the YRIC office.

A systematic fish market will be developed in Yangon, he said.

The Yangon Region Chief Minister also met with representatives from the CITIC Myanmar Company and discussed matters related to the establishment of the fish auction market.

At present, the Korea-Myanmar friendship bridge (Dala) project is under way. Upon completion of the bridge, a fish market will be built on the Dala side.

"Fishery ports are not well-organized in Yangon. The ports have provoked the ire of local residents due to offensive odor, which people consider a nuisance and a bother. Additionally, there is the problem of inadequate water supply to nearby villages as ice plants near the ports take a large amount of water from the pipeline," said U Phyo Min Thein.

The Kyimyindine fish market is also facing difficulties due to the running of container trucks. ■

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

ACTING CHIEF EDITOR
Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORS
Zaw Min
Zaw Htet Oo
Win Ko Ko Aung

INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR
Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

LOCAL NEWS EDITORS
Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com

TRANSLATORS
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun

REPORTER
Nyein Nyein Ei,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Aye Yamon Oo

PHOTOGRAPHER
Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAM
Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Thein Htwe

EDITORIAL SECTION
(+95) (01)8604529,
Fax – (+95) (01) 8604305

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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Bago Region eyes bus services to reduce traffic accidents

BAGO REGION Chief Minister invited private companies to carry out mini bus projects for reducing traffic acidents in the region.

He made the comment at his visit to Daewoo Bus Myanmar Co Ltd located on Yangon-Pyay road in Ward 9, Htauk Kyant (North) ward, Mingalardon Township, Yangon.

."Transportation is very important in modern times. We have established new public organizations to reduce government control, and so, we have formed the BRTA under the incumbent government and plan to conduct business as a public organization. We are also promoting the transportation sector. Road safety warning signs have been erected and new bus stops have been set up around the region. We want private companies to run mini-bus services on tiral basis in Bago Region."

The chief minister visited the factory and Managing Director Dr Kyaw Kyaw Aung detailed about the production process at the factory.

Bago Region Chief Minister U Win Thein inspects the assembling of Daewoo Bus in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: TIN SOE (BAGO)**

The Daewoo Bus Myanmar Co Ltd, a Korea-based company, has been operational since 1955. Besides Myanmar, the company has set up factories in Korea, China, Viet Nam, Pakistan, and Taiwan. The company is exporting vehicles to 51 countries according to demand. With the permission of the Myanmar Investment Commission, the production of Daewoo buses is being planned in Myanmar. At present, the company is manufacturing the Daewoo City Bus BS106 and the Lestar minibus in Myanmar as a pilot project, which began in March.

The company is planning to run the buses made at Daewoo Bus Myanmar Co as a pilot project on the Yangon-Bago, Bago-Nyaunglebin, Nyaunglebin-Yedashe, Yedashe-Nay Pyi Taw, and Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon routes in Bago East. The buses will also operate on the Yangon-Taikkyi, Taikkyi-Minhla, Minhla- Paungde, Paungde-Pyay, and Pyay-Yangon routes in Bago West.

The Chief Minister inspected the facility around 9.30 a.m. yesterday, and was accompanied by Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Hla Myo Shwe, Industry, Electricity and Communications Minister U Than Win, Regional Hluttaw representative U Nyunt Shwe, and Bago Region Transportation Administration (BRTA) members.

First, Daewoo Bus Myanmar Co. Ltd Managing Director Dr. Kyaw Kyaw Aung briefed the Chief Minister and officials about the history and background of the factory, the production of vehicles at the factories, and plans for operating bus lines services.—Tin Soe (Bago) ■

(Translated by Hay Mar)

K2bln express bus terminal in Kachin State 95% complete

THE construction of an express bus terminal worth over K2 billion near Mohnyin Degree College, Kachin State, is 95 per cent complete, said U Myint Win, the Managing Director of the Red Shan National Development Company Limited.

"The express bus terminal is being constructed by the Red Shan (Shan Ni) National Development Company Limited. To build the e terminal, a contract was signed on 31 December, 2016. The construction of the terminal was started with the permission of the state government. The terminal will include 48 shops measuring 26x40x23 feet each, 28 rooms for express Association car gates, 20 stalls, which will include bathrooms, eight warehouses measuring 26x40x23 feet each, one car workshop center with a passengers' concourse building, and one administrator office. The current price of each shop is over K70 million. At present, the work is 95 per cent complete. As soon as the installation of the water pipeline system is finished, the terminal will be opened," said U San Tint, the administrative manager of Red Shan National Development Company Limited, Mohnyin Town.

Labourers work at the construction site of an express car terminal near Mohnyin Degree College in Kachin State. **PHOTO: NI TOE**

"The local banks had said that they would provide small and medium term loans to implement the project. But, they could not provide the loans. The state government has given permission to use 10 acres of land to construct the express bus terminal.

We need to get loans from local banks to complete the project," he added.

The state government is developing road transport and communication in Kachin State. Although tenders have been permitted for construction of terminals in Mogaung, Phakant, Tanai, and Bhamo towns, only one express car terminal is being constructed in Mohnyin Township by Shan Ni National Development Company Limited to offer better transportation to locals and foreigners.—Ni Toe ■ *(Translated by Hay Mar)*

Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee holds eighth meeting

FROM PAGE-5

As for the members of central committees, working committees and supervisory committees, an all-out effort should be made to conduct the schemes at full capacity in cooperation with the stakeholders in the aim of fostering the long-term benefits for the state and its citizens. The Vice-President also called for making suggestions to draw up the ongoing work process that could generate a sound environmental management plan based on the experiences, weakness and strong points of the committee during the period of three years.

Then chairman of central committee and Union Minister U Ohn Win clarified the polices, strategies and principal schemes of work, drawing up long-term and short-terms schemes in terms of relevant ministries, organizations, the Nay Pyi Taw Council area, region/state governments, drawing up the yearly financial allocation and monitoring laws, regulations and procedures.

Next, secretary of the central committee and Director-General of the Environmental Conservation Department U Hla Maung Thein explained about the work progress of the seventh coordination meeting and its ongoing schemes.

Afterwards, Central committee members Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw, Deputy Attorney General U Win Myint, Permanent Secretaries U Myo Myint Maung, U Win Khant, U Tin Maung Oo, Dr. Tha Tun Kyaw, U Tun Tun Naing and U Win Tint, director-generals, officials, representatives from NGOs, Chairman of Ecosystem Conservation and Community Development Initiative (ECCDI) Dr. Kyaw Tint, Vice-President of UMFCCI Dr. Myo Thet, officials from six working committees, chairmen of the Nay Pyi Taw Council and state supervisory committees U Tin Tun, U La Saing, U T Yal, U Saw Pyae Tha, U Mehn Hin Darl, U Bauk Htaung Htan, U Hla Htwe, Dr. Saw Nyo Win, U Myint Zaw, U Myo Thit, Dr. Min Kyi Win, U Kyaw Lwin, U Han Tun, Dr. Nyi Nyi Aung and U Tin Aung Win explained about conducting the process of environmental conservation and mitigation of climate change, ongoing work programmes, barriers to implementation, cooperation with INGOs, preventative measures in line with the environmental conservation law, measures being taken to avoid environmental degradation and safeguarding cultural heritage, speeding up the education campaign about the environmental conservation and preventive measures in order to prevent the infectious diseases on account of climate change.

Then secretary of the central committee and Director-General of the Environmental Conservation Department U Hla Maung Thein clarified the proposals made to discuss and ongoing work schemes of the committees. Following this, the meeting has laid down nine points. The meeting then came to a close with closing remarks by the Vice President.

The following dignitaries and senior officials attended the meeting:

The committee's Chairman and the Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, U Ohn Win, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, as a member of central committee, U Hla Kya, Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint and the members of central committee, the member of Nay Pyi Taw Council and the ministers of state/region governments who are the chairmen of Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Supervising Committees, the chairmen and the members of of six working committees, the permanent secretaries, the directors-general, Chairman of Ecosystem Conservation and Community Development Initiative (ECCDI) Dr Kyaw Tint who represented INGOs, Vice President of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry Dr Myo Thet and officials.– MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin+Win Ko Ko)

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RECRUITMENT NOTICE

The Embassy of India, Yangon urgently requires graduate Executive Assistant for its Liaison Office at Nay Pyi Taw. The candidates should be in the age group of 27 – 35 years having 3-5 years of working experience. Detailed information is available on the website of Embassy of India, Yangon **https://embassyofindiayangon.gov.in**.

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Vice President U Henry Van Thio reviews tours to disaster-torn areas

FROM PAGE-6

Then, Union Minister Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, the Committee's Vice Chairman, explained about the collaboration in search and rescue works.

Union Minster Dr Win Myat Aye, the Committee's alternate Vice Chairman, presented about raising and using funds, emergency responses and the future plans.

Then, the suggestions were made by the members of committee Union Ministers Lt-Gen Sein Win, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr Pe Myint, Dr Aung Thu, U Than Sin Maung, Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Dr Myint Htwe, U Soe Win, U Han Zaw and U Kyaw Tin; Deputy Ministers U Tin Myint, U Kyaw Myo, Dr Tun Naing, U Kyaw Linn and U Soe Aung; Permanent Secretary Professor Dr Thet Khaing Win; Directors-General U Myat Thu and U Kyaw Myint Hlaing; Geologist U Yu Maung.

In his concluding remarks, the Vice President reminded that the responsible persons need to prioritize on safety measures in rescues and surveys, to conduct educative programmes effectively for the public, to hold rehearsals for less devastations and to implement all the 12 tasks of the natural disaster working committee.

After the meeting, Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspected the operations of Emergency Management Center.—MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman receives New Zealand Ambassador

ANTI-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi received New Zealand Ambassador Mr Steve Marshall and party at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to results from workshop on complaints handling mechanism jointly organized by ACC, Union Civil Service Board and New Zealand Embassy and future work plans on it. Also present at the meeting were Anti-Corruption Commission's Secretary U San Win, member Daw Myat Myat Soe, U Aung Than Myint and Directors-General from the commission office.—MNA ■ *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)*

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi meets with New Zealand Ambassador Mr Steve Marshall at Office of the Anti-Corruption Commission in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Seven checkpoints opened in Sagaing to curb illegal timber trade

SEVEN combined checkpoints have been opened in Sagaing Region for seizing timber as part of a crack down on illegal logging. Five of the checkpoints have been established in Katha, Shwebo, Yinmabin, and Monywa districts, under the supervision of the Sagaing Region government, and two checkpoints have been set up in Yinmabin and Katha districts, under the supervision of the Forest Department. "The checkpoints have been opened in Nabar junction, Indaw township and Kyaungtan junction, Kawlin township, Katha district; near Taw Kyin village, Taze Township, Shwebo District; near Kunpinyae checkpoint, Kani Township, Yinmabin district; and Shwe Saryae village, Chindwin river bank, Budalin township, Monywa District. Those five checkpoints have been opened under the management of the Sagaing Region government. Two more checkpoints have been opened in Kin village, beside the Chindwin river, Kani Township, Yinmabin district; and, Myataung village, beside the Ayeyawady river, Htigyaing Township, Katha District by the Forest Department," said U Than Soe, the director of the Sagaing Region Forest Department. From October to July in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, more than 8,600 tons of hardwood and other timber have been seized in Sagaing, Shwebo, Monywa, Katha, Kalay, Mawlaik, and Khamti districts of Sagaing Region.

During the period, a total of 616 people have been arrested in relation to cases of illegal harvesting of timber, and 299 vehicles, 29 tractors, 33 htawlargyi, 183 motorbikes, 33 three-wheel motorbikes, 100 water vessels, seven guns, 6 trailers, 201 sawmills, and 111 chain saws have been seized, according to the Sagaing Region Forest Department.—Myo Win Tun (Monywa) ■ *(Translated by Hay Mar)*

Officials inspect seized illegal timber in Sagaing Region. **PHOTO: MYO WIN TUN (MONYWA)**

Myanmar Paddy Producers Association offers free soil testing to farmers

By Aye Yamone

THE Myanmar Paddy Producers Association, in cooperation with the Agriculture Department, is providing free soil lab tests to farmers, according to a workshop entitled 'Enrich the Soil to Boost the Nation's Wealth', held on 12 August at the UMFCCI office.

"Some farmers are using fertilizers excessively. This can lead to soil degradation. Therefore, we have decided to assist in farmland treatment. We will share know-how on treating farmland after soil testing," said U Sein Win Hlaing, the Chairman of the Myanmar Paddy Producers Association.

Excessive use of cheap and low-quality fertilizers, imported through the border areas, is causing soil damage, he said, adding soil lab tests have been provided in the past five years.

At present, the association is carrying out soil testing and farmland assessment in Twantay and Kawhmu townships of Yangon Region.

"The association is providing this service to those farmers who want to conduct a soil test. We provide the test once the farmers send us farmland data and soil samples. At present, we are only forwarding those samples to the Agriculture Department. But, we have negotiated with the concerned experts to set up a laboratory. The association is financing the laboratory test for farmers so that they can get soil tested for free," said U Sein Win Hlaing.

At present, awareness on soil testing needs to be raised among farmers, he added. The Myanmar Paddy Producers Association is in discussions with Japan for financial assistance to set up a laboratory.

"It is good that the association is providing this service. We will get to know our land quality. There are 16 essential elements for growing crops. We will know which element the soil needs," said U Win Aung Hlaing, a farmer from Kyaiklat Township.

The Myanmar Paddy Producers Association is linking the farmers to agriculture machinery companies for purchase of equipment through instalments. There are 15 million acres of monsoon paddy fields and over 2 million acres of summer paddy fields in the country, which brings the total figure to 17 million acres. ■ *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

China moving troops to Hong Kong border: Trump

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Tuesday China is moving troops to the border with Hong Kong, where anti-government protests staged at the airport led to extensive flight cancellations.

"Our Intelligence has informed us that the Chinese Government is moving troops to the Border with Hong Kong," Trump said in a Twitter post, without providing details.

"Everyone should be calm and safe!" he wrote.

Riot police briefly clashed with pro-democracy protesters outside Hong Kong International Airport for the second day on Tuesday, though calm returned to the airport in the early hours of Wednesday.

Earlier Tuesday, Trump called the Hong Kong protests "a very tough situation" and "a very tricky situation." He urged relevant parties to address the issue peacefully.

"I hope it works out for liberty. I hope it works out for everybody, including China," he told reporters in New Jersey.

"I hope it works out peacefully. I hope nobody gets hurts. I hope nobody gets killed."

In a related move, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with China's top foreign policy official Yang Jiechi on Tuesday in New York, and apparently discussed the situation in Hong Kong. Pompeo and Yang, director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, "had an extended exchange of views on US-China relations," the State Department said, without elaborating.—Kyodo News ■

FILE PHOTO: Chinese President Xi Jinping reviews troops in Hong Kong on 30 June, 2017, marking the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong's handover. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

S Korea marks "comfort women" memorial day

SEOUL — South Korea on Wednesday observed its official "comfort women" memorial day for a second year, with a ceremony commemorating Korean women who were forced to work in the Japanese military's wartime brothels.

The memorial day was marked as relations with Japan have fallen to their lowest point in years due to a number of disputes, including South Korean Supreme Court rulings ordering Japanese companies to pay compensation over wartime labor. "Since last year's memorial day, eight of the victims have passed away and now only 20 of them survive," Gender Equality and Family Minister Jin Sun Mee said in her remarks at the ceremony, vowing efforts to restore the women's dignity and honor. "We will establish the comfort women issue as one of women's human rights and educate a new generation so that it will be remembered as a historical lesson," Jin added. President Moon Jae In, who attended the first official memorial day ceremony but did not do so this year, made a similar pledge to the victims in a message posted on Facebook. Moon said Wednesday's ceremony was made possible because former comfort women were not afraid to speak publicly about the hardships they faced. While the president did not criticize Japan in his message, he said his government would work to spread awareness of the issue.—Kyodo News ■

23 dead, 13,000 people hospitalized as heatwave continues to scorch Japan

TOKYO — Japan's Fire and Disaster Management Agency said Wednesday that 23 people died among 12,751 people who were rushed to hospitals due to heat-related illnesses across Japan over the week from Aug. 5.

Amid a protracted heatwave that has scorched wide swathes of Japan, the agency's preliminary data showed that the number of people rushed to hospital due to the heat had risen past the 10,000 level for the second straight week.

Of those rushed to hospital, the agency said that 400 of them had to be admitted for treatment of severe symptoms for at least three weeks. Shorter stays in hospital were required for around 4,500 patients, the agency also said.

Tokyo saw the highest number of people treated for heat-related conditions at 1,465, followed by the neighboring prefecture of Saitama at 977 patients. Osaka, meanwhile, saw 897 people rushed to hospital for treatment due to the severe heat.

Of the total people requiring hospital treatment, around 55 per cent of them were aged 65 or older.

A woman uses a portable fan to cool herself as Japan suffers from a heatwave. **PHOTO: AFP**

According to Japan's Meteorological Agency (JMA) Wednesday, the highest recorded temperature anywhere in Japan this year was logged in Joetsu City, Niigata Prefecture on the western coast, where the mercury soared to 40.3 degrees Celsius.

Also in Niigata, Sanjo City saw temperatures hit 39.5 degrees Celsius.

Cities in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Tottori Prefecture and Hyogo Prefecture saw the mercury rise well over 37 degrees Celsius, the weather agency said. —Xinhua ■

News in Brief

Yasukuni's bid for emperor to visit rebuffed

TOKYO – Yasukuni Shrine, seen by critics as a symbol of Japan's past militarism, last fall sought a visit by then-Emperor Akihito to mark the 150th anniversary this year of its establishment, but his aides declined, Kyodo News learned Tuesday.

Yasukuni contacted the Imperial Household Agency last September regarding a visit, citing the examples of emperors who went to the Shinto shrine in Tokyo on its 50th and 100th anniversaries, according to officials at the two entities who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The rejection by the agency increases the possibility that the emperor will not visit the shrine in the future. Yasukuni is dedicated to millions of war dead but also honors more than a dozen individuals who were convicted of war crimes after World War II. Past visits to the shrine by Japanese political leaders have infuriated countries that were victims of Japanese wartime aggression, especially China and South Korea. The agency's Board of Ceremonies replied to Yasukuni that then-Emperor Akihito was busy preparing for succession rites prior to his abdication in April and it declined to pass on the message from the shrine to the agency's chief, Shinichiro Yamamoto, or to the Board of Chamberlains, which handles the day-to-day activities of the imperial family, the officials said.—Kyodo News ■

URGENT: Pakistan vows to respond to any Indian aggression in Kashmir

MUZAFFARABAD – Prime Minister Imran Khan warned India Wednesday that Pakistan was prepared to respond to any aggression in the disputed region of Kashmir, vowing the time had come to teach Delhi a lesson.

"The Pakistani army has solid information that they are planning to do something in Pakistani Kashmir, and they are ready and will give a solid response," Khan said during a televised speech in Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan-administered Kashmir. "We have decided that if India commits any type of violation we will fight till the end."—AFP ■

AFF U-18 Next Media Cup: Draw enough for Myanmar to secure spot in semifinal

Myanmar's Khun Kyaw Zin Hein (red) tries to get the ball past Indonesia's M Fajar (white) during the Group A match of the AFF Under-18 Next Media Cup 2019 yesterday at the Thong Nhat Stadium in Ho Chi Minh City. **PHOTO: MFF**

THE Myanmar U-18 national football team has secured a semifinal berth in the AFF Under-18 Next Media Cup 2019 by holding the Indonesia U-18 to a draw in the last match for Group A yesterday at the Thong Nhat Stadium in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam.

A draw result was enough for both teams to get a spot in the semifinal of Group A of the tourney, as the teams had secured all wins in the previous group play.

In yesterday's match, Myanmar used open attacks right from the kickoff, but the physically fit Indonesian players put up a good defence.

Myanmar had three corners on a trot to make the difference, but neither Aww Bar Kha nor Hein Htet Aung could make them count, and the first half finished with both teams tied at 0-0.

Myanmar switched tactics in the second half, resorting to speedy play. It managed to breach Indonesia's defence at the 49th minute to score the opening goal. The goal was beautifully netted by Hein Htet Aung over a cross from teammate Pyae Phyo Aung.

Indonesia scored the equalizer at 68 minutes, with a sublime freekick by captain Rizky Ridho Ramadhani.

In the remaining minutes, there were no more goals for Myanmar as Indonesia changed its defense strategy to ensure a draw.

With the match ending in a 1-1 draw, Myanmar will take part in the semifinal. They are in the second position with the same points, but with a goal difference with the Indonesia team.

Speaking about the match, Myanmar head coach Soe Myat Min said: "I am generally pleased with the performance of the team. It was a fair result, and now we will look forward to the semifinals."

"I must say that I was not happy with the performance of the players as some of the players I put in should be playing a lot better than those who have already played four matches," said Indonesia head coach Fakhri Hussaini.

With the score tied, both teams will wait for the outcome of the final three matches in Group B today to know their opponents in the semifinal.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Semifinals of MPT U-14 tourney to be held on 16 Aug

THE semifinal matches of the MPT U-14 football tournament, organized under the supervision of the Myanmar Football Federation and the Myanmar National League, will take place on 16 August, according to a statement issued by the MNL.

Four teams – Pakokku A team, Minbu B team, Minbu A team, and Thayet C team – have secured a place in the semifinal.

In the group stage, the Pakokku A team notched up 4 points by beating the Pakokku B and the Magway C teams, while the Minbu B team also secured 4 points by defeating the Magway A and the Gangaw A teams.

In the meantime, the Minbu A team bagged 4 points by beating the Gangaw A and the Magway B teams, while the Thayet C team passed the group stage with the same points, but a goal difference from Thayet A and B teams.

The semifinals will be held at the Magway District Stadium in Magway. While the Pakokku A team will play against Minbu B team, the Minbu A team will take on the Thayet C team.

Football fans and students have been invited to watch the semifinal matches, according to the statement issued by the Myanmar National League.–Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Judgement day for Real Madrid as Zidane's second coming begins

MADRID (Spain) — Zinedine Zidane returned to save Real Madrid and the time has come for results.

In a packed-out press conference under the Santiago Bernabeu in March, the club's president Florentino Perez delivered the grandest of re-introductions.

"We need to start working on a glorious new era," said Perez. "That is why we welcome back Zinedine Zidane."

Some might have expected a bounce but nobody blamed the coach when performances continued to drag and the gap behind Barcelona, rather than narrowing, widened.

Zidane took over a team with nothing to play for and a squad he knew was in need of reform. He knew because he had left it nine months earlier, just before it was broken.

There was no quick fix. In his 11 games at the end of last season, Madrid won five, the only promise of progress the words Zidane kept repeating. "Things will change, for sure," he said.

Zidane denied it but they were seen as trials, every line-up scanned for clues as to who would survive the summer.

Yet in some ways, none of it mattered and the results, not to mention attendances at the Santiago Bernabeu, said as much. "The best thing for us is that it's over," said Zidane, after the season ended in defeat. And now it begins again, the season, and Zidane's second era as coach.

Many wondered why he came back, risking everything after the perfection of three Champions League titles out of three.

The assumption was he returned to a stronger hand, able to make demands the club were ready to meet and with the backing to rebuild in the way he had always wanted.

He might have been encouraged too, when Eder Militao, Ferland Mendy, Luka Jovic, Rodrygo and Eden Hazard all signed for a total close to 300 million euros.

Hazard was the headline act, a throw-back to a previous era that Zidane knew well, when the world's most glamorous players seemed to walk through the doors every year. "I'm not a galactico, not yet, but I hope I will be one day," said Hazard when he joined.

Eden Hazard joined Real Madrid from Chelsea in July. **PHOTO: AFP**

Bale stalemate

But Madrid's pockets are not as deep as they once were and sales were also needed, by the club and their coach.

Zidane showed no inclination to make soothe and use Gareth Bale, instead urging the Welshman to make a move to China.

"It is very close," Zidane said. "We hope he leaves soon, it would be best for everyone."

Bale's agent told AFP Zidane was a "disgrace" and if the Frenchman had hoped to push the deal over the line, he would be disappointed as Madrid changed their mind over the fee.—AFP ■