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Friday, 20 December 2019

Pre-Christmas celebrations brighten Presidential Palace



President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho presents gift to Reverend U Saw Aung Aung Lwin from All Nationals' Baptist Church in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

A pre-Christmas celebration was held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

All the citizens of Myanmar, President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and their family were presented with well wishes from the group led by Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, his wife and family and Reverend U Saw Aung Aung Lwin from the All Nationals' Baptist Church in Thapyaygon Ward, Nay Pyi Taw.

Firstly, members of the church sang hymns and the Reverend prayed for the wellbeing of all the citizens of Myanmar,

the President, First Lady and their family. The President and First Lady then gave them presents in return.

Evening on 15 December, a group from the United Pentagonal Church (Yangon) led by youth leader Michael Jayson sang hymns at the Presidential Palace and a group led by General-Secretary Reverend Man Par Mar Stan of the Myanmar Council of Churches and Youth Executive Secretary Pwee Yar did the same on 17 December. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

State Counsellor attends opening of Manaung solar plant, meets locals



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi formally open the ceremony of the solar power plant in Manaung, Rakhine State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

CHAIRPERSON of the Border Area and National Races Development Affairs Central Committee State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday attended the opening ceremony of a solar power plant in Manaung, Rakhine State and met with local people.

The State Counsellor and her entourage left Nay Pyi Taw for Thandwe by special flight, and then they flew to Manaung by helicopter to attend the ceremony.

(Her opening address at the ceremony is covered on Page-5)

The power plant with Solar PV and Energy Storage System (ESS) and a Die-

sel Hybrid System is part of corporate social responsibility efforts of POSCO International Corporation's Shwe Natural Gas Project, and Phase-1 of the plant was implemented at a cost of US\$2.5 million.

With 1,411 solar panels, 720 batteries, and a two-hour energy storage system, the project will produce 0.5 MW of power and supply electricity to 1,435 households in five wards of Manaung and three nearby villages.

Phase-2 of the project will be carried out with the assistance of the Korea International Cooperation Agency.

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Pyithu Hluttaw

Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 14<sup>th</sup> regular session concludes

THE 18<sup>th</sup>-day meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> regular session of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw was held at the Pyithu Hluttaw meeting hall of the Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. At the meeting asterisk marked questions were raised and answered, Bar Council Election rules and Economic and Financial Development Committee annual report approved and two annual reports discussed and approved.

Asterisk marked question and answer session

In the asterisk marked question and answer session questions raised by U Khin Maung Thein of Sagaing constituency on relocating and reconstructing Sagaing Township Okpo Village post primary school; U Than Aung of Ngaputaw constituency on a plan to construct new school buildings for schools in Ngaputaw township; Dr. Sein Mya Aye of Dala constituency on using PVC doors and door frames instead of permitted teak doors and door frames in constructing schools in Yangon Region; U Zarni Min of Shwegu constituency on arrangement to teach the subject of democracy and Hluttaw in middle and high school curriculum and Daw Tin Tin Yi of Kyunsu constituency on a plan to provide sports equip-



Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung. PHOTO: MNA

ments to all high schools in the country were answered by Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun.

Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung on the other hand answered to questions posed by Dr Than Aung Soe of Minhla constituency on the department overseeing pre-primary schools operated privately and by Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and U Kyaw Shwe of Yanbye constituency on the reason for incomplete construction of a cyclone shelter in Yanbye Township Thinganet Village.

Hluttaw approves Bar Council Election Rules

Following the asterisk marked question and answer



MP U Khin Maung Thein. PHOTO: MNA

session, Bill Committee member Dar Mar Mar Khaing submitted the nine amendments made by the committee on the Bar Council Election Rules tabled by Union Supreme Court. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker then obtained the decision of the Hluttaw and approves it. Next, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the comment of the Hluttaw on approving the entire Bar Council Election Rules. As there was no objection toward it, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced the Hluttaw's approval of the matter. **Hluttaw approves Economic and Financial Development Committee annual report**

Following this Economic and Financial Development Committee member Dr Aye Min tabled a motion for the Hluttaw

to approve and accept the committee's annual report and Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the decision of the Hluttaw and approved it.

Hluttaw discuss and approve International Relations Committee annual report

Afterwards Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee annual report was discussed by U Oo Hla Saw of MraukU constituency and Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Major Win Min Tun. Committee Chairman U Zaw Thein responded to the discussion of the Hluttaw representatives and Committee member Dr Daw Shwe Pone tabled a motion for the Hluttaw to accept and approve the report. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the decision of the Hluttaw and announced the Hluttaw's acceptance and approval.

Transport, Communication and Construction Committee annual report

Similarly Pyithu Hluttaw Transport, Communication and Construction Committee annual report was discussed by Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Major Ye Naing Lwin and U Nyan Hein of Thanbyu-zayat constituency. Committee

Chairman U Win Tut responded to the discussion of the Hluttaw representatives and Committee secretary Daw Yin Min Hlaing tabled a motion for the Hluttaw to accept and approve the report to which Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the decision of the Hluttaw and announced the Hluttaw's acceptance and approval.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker closing speech

In the final agenda of the day, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat delivered a closing speech summarizing the works conducted by the Hluttaw in the current regular session of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw. The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker remarked on the importance of unity in a time when people centered democracy system was being established while pointing out on the results of disunity in the past and urges all to work hand in hand with the people to obtain the trust of the people and to strengthen the practice of all inclusive democracy practice.

After delivering the closing speech Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker announced the successful conclusion of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw's 14<sup>th</sup> regular session. —Aye Aye Thant (MNA)

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Amyotha Hluttaw

Second Amyotha Hluttaw concludes its 14<sup>th</sup> Regular Session

THE 18<sup>th</sup>-day meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> regular session of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw was held yesterday where a question and answer session was held, a bill discussed, Hluttaw Speaker summarized the Hluttaw session and announced the successful completion of the present regular session of the Second Amyotha Hluttaw.

QNA session

The meeting starts with question and answer session where U Myint Naing of Rakhine State constituency 5 first raised a question on taking action against responsible person for constructing low quality road in Kyauktaw Township and Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin responded to the question.

Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr Mya Lay Sein on the other hand responded



Amyotha Hluttaw is being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

to questions raised by U Kyaw Kyaw of Rakhine State constituency 4 on plan to construct a standard building for MraukU Township Natchaung sub rural health centre, Dr Zaw Lin Htut of Mon State constituency 9 on a plan to train and appoint special-

ist and technicians to treat cancer patients and to expand radiation treatment units in State/Region level hospitals and U Ko Ko Naing of Sagaing Region constituency 8 on arrangements made to provide health care service under a Special Tour pro-

gramme twice a year to villagers in remote and distance villages **Hluttaw discuss bill amending Myanmar Medical Council Law**

Next, bill amending Myanmar Medical Council Law was discussed by U Hsan Myint of

Ayeyawady Region constituency 3 and U Soe Thein (a) U Maung Soe of Taninthayi Region constituency 10.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker summarizes Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 14<sup>th</sup> regular session

Afterwards, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker summarized works conducted during Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 14<sup>th</sup> regular session. After wishing the Hluttaw representatives a pleasant journey back to their constituencies and to serve their constituents, people, region and the

country increasingly, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker announced the successful conclusion of Second Amyotha Hluttaw's 14<sup>th</sup> regular session. — Aung Ye Thwin (MNA)

(Translated by Zaw Min)



## State Counsellor attends opening of Manaung solar plant, meets locals



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech at the meeting with local people in Manaung, Rakhine State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

### FROM PAGE-1

Power supply through the national grid reached 50 percent of the country in December this year.

Speaking at the event, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing pledged that his ministry would continue to make efforts for supplying power to remaining areas which have not access to power and invited the cooperation of the local people in the drive.

He said the power supply from the plant would improve the socio-economic life of the people in Manaung Township, adding that small and medium enterprises which will emerge with power supply would create job opportunities to local people.

Afterwards, Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu detailed about the plans for supply power to the whole township.

Afterwards, Chief Executive Officer of POSCO International Corporation Mr Kim Young Sang extended greetings.

Next, Managing Director of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise U Myo Myint Oo handed over documents related with the power plant to Managing Director of the Electric Power Supply Enterprise U Saw Win Maung.

The ministry sets its target of supplying power to 55 per cent of the whole country in 2021, over 75 per cent in 2025-2026 and 100 per cent in 2030.

To reach its target, the ministry is making all possible ways including solar power, mini-hydro power, wind-power and diesel-fired power plants.

During the three and half years period from April 2016 to September 2019, the ministry has increased 904 MW, 19,611 miles

of power cables and 12,635 MVA sub-power stations, and 72 towns and 6,038 villages could gain access to the power supply network.

The electricity consumption has increased from 34 per cent of the country in 2016 to 50.09 per cent this year. While consumption increases, production is targeted to increase 1,166 MW.

Works on power supply to Rakhine State through the national grid started in 2011, and in December 2014, the people in Taungup, Kyaukpyu, An, Ponnagyun, Sittway, MraukU, Thandwe, Yanbye, Kyauktaw and nearby areas could get access to the national power supply network. To supply power to the areas in Mai, Minbya and nearby areas, two sub-power stations were established in 2016, and to supply power to Gwa Township and nearby areas, cable installation and one sub-power station was established in July 2017.

Three and half years period after the incumbent government took office, the ministry could supply power to Gwa, Mai, Minbya, Gwa, Kyeintali, Myebon, Pauktaw, Sane, Kandaukkya, Tattaung, Rathedaung, Buthidaung and Maungtaw, and has sets a target to supply power to Kyeinchaung through Maungtaw at the end of 2020.

As 23 towns, 561 villagers and 125,595 households in Rakhine State has got access to national power supply network in 2019, the electrification ration has reached 30.55 per cent. The ministry has targeted to reach the electrification ration to 55 per cent in 2021-2022 and 75 per cent in 2025-2026.

At the meeting, the State Counsellor delivered the address, expressing thanks to Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu

and the audience.

She explained the importance of visit to Rakhine State as the area is encountering instability and armed conflicts, adding that every corner of the country, either with conflicts or with no conflicts, is included in the Union of Myanmar.

The State Counsellor said, "I need to pay more attention on the conflict-stricken areas. For example, a doctor needs to take more care to an unhealthy person as healthy persons can lead their lives steadily and keep up

was not because of armed conflicts. Since the government took office in 2016, we have decided to solve problems of Rakhine State as we have expected that other countries would blame us.

Regardless of any external pressure, we need to solve our problems by ourselves. So, we formed the Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development in Rakhine State within two months of our administration as we believed only development and rule of law could help the Rakhine State

in their organ.

It should be understood that any problem at any part of our country is related with the whole Union. Everybody needs to develop such attitude as it is more important in the conflict-affected areas, like Rakhine, as we are in the same boat.

I have already said that using armed power for change would be very unwise, cowardly or lacking of good intentions. Any person with good intentions for the country will never commit destructive acts. Moreover, everybody needs to find solutions steadily how to make changes for development. The lack of knowledge could not find a right solution, and the lack of endeavours could not implement the solution.

The country has now many opportunities for changes. One of them is the elections. Any party does not get a favour in the elections, including the National League for Democracy. Instead, were oppressed. In accordance with the policy of party, we always keep on non-violence way. We organized people with the strength of honesty and respect as we have no armed or financial powers.

We also value people and explained our needs and goals. As people realized our policies, we gained their supports to form a government. Therefore, people need to abide by democratic practices. Common sense of individuals could help in development of the country. So, we need consider the importance of common sense which does not focus on egoism. The egoism could deter a common sense. Instead, we need to focus on pluralism.

It should be understood that any problem at any part of our country is related with the whole Union. Everybody needs to develop such attitude as it is more important in the conflict-affected areas, like Rakhine, as we are in the same boat.

their healthy lifestyles. So, we are focusing on stability and development of Rakhine State.

While the 50 percent whole country has connected with national power grid recently, electricity distributions in Rakhine State has reached 52 percent. It exceeds an average of the whole country. It did not happen incidentally, but it was well planned.

Both transport electricity is important for the whole country, especially in instable areas. Rakhine State lagged behind other areas for decades. We are paying more attention on this area. It

achieve development and peace.

It can be assumed that armed conflicts and attacks to police stations, beginning 2016, were intended to undermine the potentials for development, and to put pressure on our country from other countries. It was very unacceptable. Someone who loves this country must avoid such inappropriate actions. This problem is related with the whole country like any organ is a part of body, and that any disease of these organs are concerned with the body. No one can be said to be healthy as they have any disease

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President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and family pose for a group photo with a choir from United Pentagonal Church (Yangon) led by youth leader Michael Jayson sang hymns at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 December. **PHOTO: MNA**



Pre-Christmas and prayers singing Christmas songs for President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and family at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Pre-Christmas choir and prayers singing Christmas songs for President U Win Myint, First Lady Daw Cho Cho and family at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 December. **PHOTO: MNA**

## State Counsellor attends opening of Manaung solar plant, meets locals

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In a wider view, everyone must not have selfishness that centers individual organization, race or community. We must recognize people with different views from us. It is also required to develop personal capacity to point out and correct the wrong views. It would be very short-sighted to make physical attacks to others with conflicting idea. It would only be a cowardly attack. Applying wisdom is not an easy way to reach the goals. Abuse of power and violent attacks were opted very easily. The victims are Rakhine people.

Manaung has a good opportunity for development. We will help the locals fully enjoy these potentials. So, we need participation of these people to reach the goal. It must be considered for the long term. Development

of the country takes times like a long race. It will not be finished in short term, but needs regular and constant efforts.

Therefore, we need to understand when to do and what to do, without focusing only on a certain group. Rakhine people need to thoroughly consider it for the peace of the whole country.

During my tours, I tried to meet with the people in respective areas because I want to know their concerns and want to give a message who to follow democratic practices. Some persons are abusing these opportunities. It will be dangerous for all to misuse any chance, including democratic practices. And that these opportunities must be properly converted into power. During the mass meetings, people are urged to voice essential requirements for the development of regions. I

also tried to replied to personal issue. But I prefer common issues. I always try to reply the questions of my people.

Afterwards, U Tun Myint Zaw of the Kannar Ward, Manaung Township, reported on lack of paving on the 11 mile distance section of the ring road around the Manaung Island, U Maung Win Hlaing of Palin Village-tract on building a reservoir for supplying safe drinking water for the people in Palin, Kai and Kantaing village-tracts, U Pu Phyu of Kyinyo Village-tract on laying pipes to distribute water from a dam to Latpyin-Kyinyo-Kansun village-tracts, U Tin Shwe Samonte Village-tract on construction of a gravel road passing through the Maungaung Island, U Khin Maung Gyi of Theinmala Village-tract on running of Manaung-Yanbye Z-craft, Daw

Thidar Win of Nyaungkon Village on construction of Nyaungpinhla-Nyaungkon village-to-village linking road, U Chit Aye of Kinte Village on supply power to areas three miles away from a town, U Myint Shwe of Kyino Village on providing a ambulance to Kyinyo, Latme and Kanzun villagers, U Khin Maung Win Meinmakywe on repairing a lake and U Win Myint Thein of Thitpon Village on getting fee for the land used for MPT Tower.

Deputy Minister U Kyaw Myo and Rakhine State ministers answered the queries of the local people explaining the works which can be implemented in a short period and long period. The State Counsellor attended to the needs.

The State Counsellor asked local authorities to inform the people about the work they do and

explain the benefits to the people.

On behalf of the Rakhine State Government and the local authorities, the State Counsellor offered her apologies to the people for any lack of explanations. People respond depending on what they understand, she said.

She also expressed thanks to the local people for attending the meeting. "People need to understand that they have responsibilities and rights as well," said the State Counsellor, urging the people to do their work respectfully with the correct use of their rights. "If the government and the people use their responsibilities and rights correctly, Myanmar would see development at high speed," she said. She wished the people in Manaung and Rakhine State good health and wellbeing.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



## State Counsellor delivers speech at the opening of Manaung Solar Plant

“I would like to extend warm wishes to the Union Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Rakhine State Chief Minister and cabinet members, Rakhine State Hluttaw Speaker and Hluttaw representatives, department heads, officials of POSCO Daewoo Corporation, invited guests, local residents and everyone in attendance at this opening ceremony of the solar power plant.”

“The opening of the Manaung solar power plant today is a truly auspicious and important day for Rakhine State. Infrastructure and electrification are two of the most important requirements for our country and our government administration has been working hard to develop both sectors from the moment we took office.”

“Lighting up a bulb is not just for getting light after the sun has set. It is also for further developing the socioeconomic livelihood of the people through the utilization of electricity.”

“Being able to fully use electricity 24 hours a day raises the standards of living and allows the operation of industries that consume electricity, which increases job opportunities and income. This is why the Union government prioritizes the construction of infrastructure and electrification, the fundamental pieces of equal national development.”

“While our neighboring countries have achieved 80 per cent, 90 per cent, and even a hundred per cent nationwide electrification, Myanmar has only fulfilled 50 per cent of the electricity demand in 2019. This is why we have more to do ahead of us to increase electric generation.”

“We pledged for national reconciliation, internal stability, emergence of a Constitution that paves the way for the establishment of a Democratic Federal Union, and elevating the living standards of all citizens ever since we formed the new government administration.”

“We began implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP) in 2018, designed to be coherent with the globally binding Sustainable Development Goals, in order to raise the living standards of our people. It contains



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. PHOTO: MNA

three pillars and five goals whose success relies greatly on sufficient electrification.”

“Myanmar’s efforts to increase electricity generation involved upgrading 3 hydropower stations, 6 thermal power stations and one solar power station (altogether 10 power stations generating 904MW0, 19,611 miles of transmission lines, and sub-power stations generating a combined 12,635amp over the course of three and a half years from April 2016 to September 2019.”

“Furthermore, in our quest to bring electricity to places that never received them, Myawady of Kayin State and Maungtau of Rakhine State are two places that did not have electricity but are now linked to a power grid.”

“In 2016, electric generation was only sufficient to supply 34 per cent of the nation but since our government administration took office, we have managed to increase electric generation over the course of three and a half years and this December we have

achieved 50 per cent nationwide electrification.”

“We are currently working towards our aim of achieving 75 per cent nationwide electrification by 2025-2026 and a hundred per cent by 2030. In doing so, we try to link areas close to the national power grid to it while planning for areas far from the power grid to receive electricity from mini hydropower stations, wind turbines, solar power stations and diesel powered power stations. This Manaung solar power plant is one of them.”

“Solar power plants require a large area of land to construct and rely greater on the weather. They also cost more to generate electricity and for battery storage. These are their disadvantages. However, the solar power needed to produce electricity is a renewable energy source and carries with it such advantages as low maintenance costs, reduced carbon emissions, technological development, and extremely low generation of environmental pollutants. A solar power plant was

also opened in Minbu, Magway Region, in June this year.”

“Different methods are being employed to generate sufficient electricity for Rakhine State. We have plans to construct a 135MW power plant fueled by natural gases and recycling discarded heat in Kyaukpyu by using natural resources in Rakhine State. We will also implement the 150MW LNG-fueled power plant project near the 230KV Kyaukpyu sub-power station.”

“Electricity consumption increases by 15 to 19 per cent every year in Myanmar and we are working to meet those increasing demands through a strategic action plan. This plan includes future energy needs, mixed-electricity generation methods, creating a strong power grid to distribute all that generated electricity across the nation by constructing 230KV national power grids and 500KV union power grids. We are also upgrading distribution lines to prevent frequent power outages and provide stable electric supply to people already receiving electricity.”

“While there has been development in infrastructure such as roads and electricity, peace is essential to properly use these developments effectively. Regional stability is needed for the success of infrastructure development projects. Otherwise, not only would it be hard to implement these projects but investments would not be substantial as well.”

“Investing companies will only come if there are benefits for them. They won’t come if there isn’t stability in the region. This is why we must all realize just how important regional stability is for investment.”

“Faulty policies and weak management across successive generations have delayed development, and as if this wasn’t enough, if armed conflicts continue and regional stability does not exist then never mind development, local residents will be too busy struggling to survive.”

“That is why I always tell to think of the local residents first in everything you do. You can easily see whether your actions better the lives of local residents or worsen them. Have places that were once tranquil and good for working become

filled with fear and have your actions stirred trouble for your parents, relatives or kin? We need to carefully reconsider these matters.”

“Especially since now we have Hluttaws that represent the people, a civilian government that respects the people, and political dialogue that aim to establish a democratic federal union that links with the wishes of all ethnic nationals. Given these situations, consider if you still need to wage armed conflicts to get what you want or whether your kin need to suffer losses. I want everyone to consider would political methods and dialogues not reduce loss for everyone.”

“Using force and weapons is not brave. Real bravery is the zeal and perseverance employed to reach your objectives without resorting to violence. If you need weapons to be brave then remember that means you are nothing when you lose that weapon.”

“Since gaining independence, our country is not 100 per cent peaceful yet. There are always fires of conflicts raging in one place or another. We need to realize that quelling the internal flames of the nation is far more important than electricity. Electricity is just electricity, yet nothing can compare with the strength of peace. It is important that we all carefully consider this.”

“However, we cannot just aim for peace in the peace process. We need to aim for development as well. Development is needed to strengthen peace. As it is displayed in the MSDP, inclusive peace and equitable development need to be linked to achieve lasting peace and sustainable development and we acknowledge this.”

“We need to achieve both peace and development together. They cannot be implemented one after the other. They need to succeed at the same time. This is why our government is working towards the peace process in hand with development. There is no satisfaction without development, and this leads to anger which pushes to armed conflicts. Lacking peace, there can be no development and we have to work hard to free ourselves of this repetitive cycle.”

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“Investing companies will only come if there are benefits for them. They won’t come if there isn’t stability in the region. This is why we must all realize just how important regional stability is for investment.”

Find solution based on discussions and negotiations

Our ethnic brothers and sisters must find a solution based on discussions and negotiations free from mistrust and firm in faith. From there, we can proceed in lasting solidarity for the emergence of a Constitution that is fitting for our country and in accordance with democratic practices and federal principles.

*(Extract from Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint to the 71<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Independence Day Ceremony on 4 January 2019)*



National development and promoting the standard of living of all citizens is directly connected to increasing electricity generation.

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“National development and promoting the standard of living of all citizens is directly connected to increasing electricity generation. This is why we will continue towards our aim of 100 per cent nationwide electrification and we urge the people to collaborate with us in the peace process and development process.”  
“In conclusion, our country is a republic. I repeat this frequently. A republic consists of different ethnic nationalities.

This republic with different ethnicities, cultures, religions, and languages, if we were to be truly united, would be an immensely powerful republic. This is because there will be different skills, different perspectives and different ways of seeing things. It is the same as 3 or 4 people resolving an issue more effectively than a single person could. Our differences are our strength. But we need to know how to use it well for it to benefit us. If we give in to our pride, anger and greed then we would squander this strength then it would only serve

“Some people think politics doesn’t concern them and is the job of the government. Thinking that politics only concerns the government is not the democratic spirit and makes wanting democracy pointless. We’d have to put everything into the hands of the government. We marched on to the democratic path because we didn’t want that. Walking on that path requires fulfilling the democratic duties. At the top of those duties is finding a political solution through peaceful means. It is the most important.”  
“If you fail to acquire the answer that you want through peace and electoral methods then it means your skills are inadequate. That is why you need to raise your capabilities. I would like to conclude by imploring everyone to participate in strengthening development and peace so that our nation may prosper. Thank you.”

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“In conclusion, our country is a republic. I repeat this frequently. A republic consists of different ethnic nationalities. This republic with different ethnicities, cultures, religions, and languages, if we were to be truly united, would be an immensely powerful republic. This is because there will be different skills, different perspectives and different ways of seeing things. It is the same as 3 or 4 people resolving an issue more effectively than a single person could. Our differences are our strength. But we need to know how to use it well for it to benefit us. If we give in to our pride, anger and greed then we would squander this strength then it would only serve to weaken our republic. I want you to realize that damage to our republic will effect all of us individually.”



# MSME Agency launches regional action plans during first annual conference



Vice President U Myint Swe delivers the speech at the event for MSME Agency's 1<sup>st</sup> annual conference in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE MSME Agency held its 1<sup>st</sup> annual conference and launched the Regional MSME Action Plans for collaboration of the central agency and its regional branches to promote MSME sector.

Vice President U Myint Swe delivered an address at the ceremony that took place at Park Royal Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

It was also attended by Union Ministers Dr Pe Myint, Dr Aung Thu, U Ohn Win, U Soe Win, Dr Myo Thein Gyi and U Thaung Tun, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council Dr Myo Aung, Deputy Ministers U Aung Hla Tun, U Tha Oo, U Aung Htoo, U Maung Maung Win and Dr Min Ye Paing Hein, Nay Pyi Taw Council Member U Aung Myin Tun, ministers of Region/State governments, chairman of leading body of Palaung Self-Administered Zone, Deputy Mayor of Nay Pyi Taw, Permanent

Secretaries, Directors-General, Chairman of UMFCCI, members of MSME Work Committee and its Agency, members of Nay Pyi Taw and State/Region agencies, diplomats of foreign missions, experts, representatives of relevant organizations, MSME owners and invited guests.

At the ceremony, Vice President U Myint Swe explained the reasons for drawing separate action plans for specific regions with different advantages and disadvantages, investment types and sizes, interests of business firms.

Myanmar enacted MSME Development Law, its bylaws and policies in 2015 and 2016. Moreover, Myanmar is implementing the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016-2025.

The Vice President called for cooperation in implementing good practices of this plan.

He added while the global

countries have experienced technical developments and concept changes, Myanmar also has seen some challenges in technologies, concepts, competitive strategies and skills together with the increasing foreign investments into the country.

The Organization of Economic Cooperation Development (OECD) designated eight areas in ASEAN SME Policy Index (ASPI) 2018.

The MSME policy and the ASEAN Action Plan highlight the fundamental needs for development of MSME in the region.

Led by the central MSME development committee and its working committee, the MSME Agency and its regional MSME Agency developed respective action plans with the contribution of relevant organizations, departments and entrepreneurs with their discussions on advantages,

disadvantages and strategy.

In the Ease of Doing Business Index 2020 Report released in October 2019, Myanmar moved up six places from 171<sup>st</sup> to 165<sup>th</sup>, and the country also included in 'Top-20 improvers in Doing Business 2020'.

Vice President U Myint Swe also called for conducting capacity building trainings and technology transfers to ensure smart businesses that use modern technologies for implementation.

The conference aimed for reviewing interest and implementation of relevant organizations, departments and agencies in the action plans, as well as cooperation of Union government and regional governments in it.

The Vice President said results from conference could identify the needs in future plans for implementation in Union Territory Nay Pyi Taw, states and

regions. He also called for MSME work committee, MSME Agency and supporting groups, relevant departments, local agencies to do an effective implementation of the Action Plan.

During the second session of the conference, Deputy Minister for Commerce, in his capacity as the Chairman of MSME Agency, U Aung Htoo, Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry, as the Joint Chairman, Dr Min Ye Paing Hein explained about the 1<sup>st</sup> conference and launching of MSME Action Plan. They also presented certificates to the donors and partner organizations with the agency. Vice President of Myanmar Computer Federation Dr Tun Thura Thet introduced the 'MSME Application'. Participants also discussed the related topics of MSME development at the two-day conferences.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

## Joint committee on Amending 2008 Constitution holds meeting 71/2019

THE Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution held its meeting 71/2019 at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Chairman of the joint committee Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Deputy Chairman of the joint committee Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung, the joint committee Secretary Dr Myat Nyana Soe, the joint committee Joint Secretary U Htay Win Aung (a) U Pyone Cho, the joint committee's members who were Hluttaw rep-

resentatives from political parties and Tatmadaw and officials from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw office.

The joint committee discussed "the Chapter XIII: State Flag, State Seal, National Anthem and the Capital" of the 2008 Constitution. The joint committee has discussed so far the chapter-wise suggestions for amending from the Chapter I: Basic Principles of the Union to the Chapter XII: Amending of the Constitution including the Preamble that were suggested by political parties and independent representatives. — MNA

(Translated by TTN)



The meeting of the Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution being held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



# With all hands on deck to fight Malaria, eradication is possible

MYANMAR has seen a dramatic decline in malaria cases from about 600,000 cases and 972 deaths in 2009 to 76,518 cases and 19 deaths in 2018, according to statistics provided by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

It has been found that 64 per cent of malaria cases in Myanmar were reported from mainly 12 townships. To achieve our dream of malaria eradication by 2030, current technologies, human resources, and funding must be used more effectively and new ways to tackle the disease must be developed.

For fighting not only malaria, but also other mosquito-borne diseases, surveillance and information systems play a crucial role. This shows the importance of private hospitals and clinics and how reporting malaria cases to the health authorities is a must for eradicating the disease.

To improve surveillance and data collection, and to speed up information sharing, all departments concerned with fighting mosquito-borne diseases must set up telephone hotlines, and health authorities at the region, state, and township level must take part in the information sharing network.

At the same time, the participation of people is very important in fighting diseases.

The authorities are urged to step up efforts to raise awareness and educate people about mosquito-borne diseases and ways to prevent mosquito breeding in populated areas. People, on their part, must use insecticide-treated mosquito nets.

With the use of mobile tablets distributed by the Ministry of Health and Sports, the public health staff's knowledge and capability of fighting mosquito-borne diseases must be improved. Training must be given to health volunteers to ensure they are effective in fighting diseases by joining hands with the ministry staff.

Applied research on eliminating mosquitoes should be carried out with the ministries to check whether modern techniques for killing mosquitoes, piloted in some countries, are suitable for Myanmar or not.

In fact, key weapons in the malaria battle are weakening, with the parasite developing resistance to insecticides and currently available treatments.

Now is the time to bring more speed and precision to our malaria response, improve systems for tracking its spread, and optimize delivery of treatments and preventive measures.

With the promise of potential new drugs and all hands on deck to fight the disease, the possibility of eradicating malaria is closer within reach than ever before.

# Myitsone and I

By Prof Dr Aung Tun Thet

MENTIONING Myitsone is bound to remind the majority of people of the hydropower project. The truth is there are different perspectives and comments on this matter. Many different sides have rejected it and are still against it. Everyone is seeing things from their point of view and making decisions and assumptions accordingly. Here, I will not be talking about the project but rather my experience of actually visiting Myitsone. I visited Myitkyina once about four years ago. I wanted to go to Myitsone but I didn't had the time. But this time I decided to go there by any means. My wife wanted to visit it as eagerly as well.

mitted to UMFCFI Chairman U Zaw Min Win. With his permission, the UMFCFI submitted it to the central executive committee. The Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association was finally established later and it now has branches for every ethnic race. I am pleased to have been part of its formation process.

The event in Myitkyina was organized by the Kachin Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association. All the associations working across the nation gathered there. The event was grand. The two of us went from Yangon to Mandalay to Myitkyina by plane and it took two hours. There was a welcoming ceremony at the airport and it was for Vice President U Henry Van Thio and the delegation of ministers coming from Nay Pyi Taw.

Deputy Ministers and other officials arrived. Speeches were delivered, gifts conferred and the entertainment was interesting. The different traditional ethnic costumes never ceased to amaze. The food was also unique. They treated us to Kachin cuisine.

## Sustainable development for Kachin State

The Vice President inaugurated the event the next morning

also use social, health, education, and political measurements. I emphasized on Business for Peace (B4P) and urged businesses and entrepreneurs to be involved in the peace process.

I did not meant for them to participate in political dialogue but told them about some basic principles to adhere to when conducting about their business. The first is to protect human rights, second is to protect and develop staff, third is to preserve

programme so it never took place. I wanted to cultivate a habit of asking and answering questions. Our current culture has no discussions, debates or questions asked back and forth after a lecture. It just ends after the person on stage has finished saying whatever they wanted to.

There is no mutual channel of communication. It is all one-sided. I couldn't immediately think of why this happened but I remembered that it all began in the classroom. There is no communication there either.

## Give and take

After my duties were done, I went around observing the exhibitions. There were many regional products on display, including food and clothing, and on international traveler industry. It was admirable seeing young people in charge of the exhibitions. The future has to be taken care of by them.

The two of us were taken to Myitsone by U Kar Li and his wife. The roads were good and the journey was only 25 miles long. We were greeted with a truly interesting sight at the confluence of the rivers. We could see the Maykha, Malikha and Irrawaddy rivers all in one place. Not long after we got there, the ethnic affairs ministers arrived as well. All of us toured the three rivers on a motor boat.

It was beyond tranquil but the sad thing was the sight of plastic bottles floating along



Dr Aung Tun Thet

them. The dangers of plastic have extended to Myitsone.

We had grilled fish at a restaurant opened near the confluence. They were fresh and delicious. But the restaurants should be organized better but it was thankful that they managed to do the best they could. I experienced a plethora of feelings while gazing at the confluence and so many thoughts not just about Kachin State but the entire country flowed through my head.

Achieving peace should be the first priority. We must build trust between each person and each side and try to gain understanding of one another. I am reminded of the phrase 'give and take' here. They have the same meaning and both Myanmar and English. You have to give first before you can take. There is no 'take and give'. You have 'give' first so that you can 'take' what you want. I want everyone to be aware of this. The most important thing in life is giving.

(Translated by Pen Dali)

## Kachin economic forum

My trip to Myitkyina was to attend the economic forum organized by the Kachin Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association. The organizers had gone out of their way to invite me, especially U Min Banyar San. I have known him for a long time. I have advised him on his businesses a few times and done seminars in Singapore and Cambodia. I'm also close with his family. I accompanied him to the home of UMFCFI's U Aye Win two years ago.

They told of a wish to form an organization for ethnic entrepreneurs. I liked the idea and wanted to help in any way I could. That's why it was sub-

We were taken to our hotel by U Kar Li, a Kachin entrepreneur working in the jade business in Hpakhtant. He was helping with the event. We rested for a bit in the hotel and when we went down to attend the dinner reception, we met with the ethnic ministers. I am close with them. There are ethnic affairs ministers in all the states and regions and I meet with them from time to time. They were glad to see me.

We arrived at the location for the dinner reception. It was a huge hall. We arrived at the grounds that had the Manaw structure in it. Soon, the Vice President, Union Ministers,

by cutting ceremonial ribbons. He delivered a speech and I made my prepared talk after the opening ceremony. The truth is Kachin State is abundant with natural resources. It is globally renowned for its jade and its snow-capped mountains attract many tourists. Kachin State also borders China and India. Despite these advantages, Kachin State is still overwhelmed with armed conflicts and the use of illegal drugs is rampant among the younger generation.

In my talk, I included the topic of sustainable development. I said that when we talk about development we shouldn't measure it with just an economic ruler. We should

the environment, and the last one is to avoid bribery and corruption.

Entrepreneurs work in a critically important sector. They are partially responsible for creating employment and can indirectly aid in national development. The basic business in Kachin State is jade and entrepreneurs would do well to adhere to the four principles mentioned earlier. Doing so endorses regional stability and development.

The gathered audience were quite interested with what I said. I wanted there to be a Q&A session afterwards but it wasn't included in the original

Media releases

Media releases on the stability, peace and development in Rakhine State are as follows.

	News	Articles	Photos	Interviews	Press Conferences	Program	Educational Programs	PSA
Myanmar Radio and Television	4467	-	-	32	-	18	650	580
Radio Program	379	1	492	4	-	-	-	-
Information and Public Relations	942	-	1016	-	-	-	-	-
News and Periodicals	2307	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mayu FM								

Education

Access to primary education

- As of 31 July 2019, 347 Basic Education Schools were opened in Maungdaw, Butheetaung and Yathetaung Townships.

There are a total of 61,286 primary-school, middle-school and high-school students in Maungdaw, Butheetaung and Yathetaung Townships.

For the capacity-building of teachers, training on the child-friendly school project and training on the new curricula for Grades 3 and 6 were provided in April and May.

Training for New Curriculum and for Child-Friendly Space Project at State High School No. 1 Maungdaw

To facilitate quality education for all students, 16 new school buildings in 7 townships in Rakhine State and 18 temporary classroom buildings in IDP camps are under construction under the Building on Quality Basic Education Program (BoQBEP).

Basic Education Department provides salaries for 326 volunteer teachers in IDP camps and in January 2019, additional 171 volunteer teachers were transferred to the management of Basic Education Department. So, a total of 497 teachers were provided with salaries.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Office of the President  
Order 51/2019  
8<sup>th</sup> Waning of Nadaw, 1381 ME  
(19 December, 2019)

Appointment of Judge for  
Bago Region High Court

IN accord with the provisions stated in article 308 section (b), sub-section (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and article 82 section (d) of the Union Government Law, and article 45 of the Union Judiciary Law, article 18 section (d) of Region or State Government Law, Daw Aye Aye Thant has been appointed as Judge for Bago Region High Court.

Sd/ Win Myint  
President  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Myanmar Daily Weather Report  
(Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2019)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and a few cloud elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2019: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing Region, Eastern Shan, Chin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5 -7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Chin and Rakhine States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2019: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2019: Fair weather.

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Senior General Min Aung Hlaing calls on Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Gaing in Viet Nam

COMMANDER IN CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation visited the Vietnamese Defence Ministry yesterday morning, where they were welcomed by Chief of General Staff of Vietnam People's Army Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Giang with a Guard of Honour.

At the meeting hall, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Giang held discussions on bilateral cooperation of the two militaries in anti-terrorism, marine rescue works, evacuation in natural disasters, exchange of information and wider collaborations in other sectors.

In the afternoon, the Senior

General and party visited the Viettel Group. They proceeded to the National Assembly Building in Hanoi and met with its Chairwoman of Mrs Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan.

In the morning, the Senior General and party held talks with Defence Minister General Ngo Xuan Lich at the latter's office. At the meeting, they held talks on closer cooperation in both military and industrial sectors, promotion of ties between the two militaries, partnership in Tatmadaw business firms and expanding cooperation, according to the report of the Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with Chief of General Staff of Vietnam People's Army Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Giang at the Vietnamese Defence Ministry yesterday. PHOTO: C-IN-C'S OFFICE

Agricultural ministry discusses livestock business with Japanese company



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu meets with a delegation from Japan-based Kamichiku Holding Co. Ltd in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

UNION MINISTER for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu received a delegation from Japan-based Kamichiku Holding Co. Ltd at his ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed producing value-added finished products and livestock rearing, producing pet accessories for export purposes, private veterinary services, the gayal breeding business,

honey and bee products processing business, producing supplementary animal feed and livestock feed, and producing pet food.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Hluttaw capacity-building team receives Forum of Federations

DAW SU SU LWIN, head of the Advisory Group on Parliamentary Capacity-building received a delegation from the Forum of Federations (FOF) at 2 pm in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

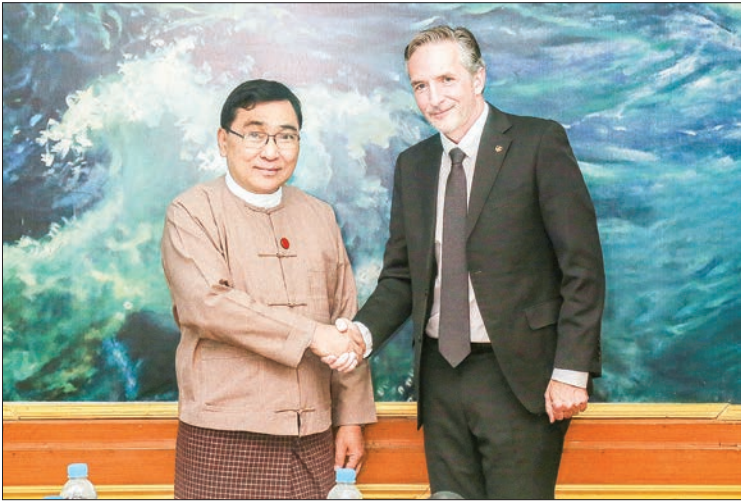
They discussed reports for 2020, FOF's processes, and cooperating between Hluttaws as before.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Head of the Advisory Group on Parliamentary Capacity-building Daw Su Su Lwin meets with a representative from the Forum of Federations (FOF) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Union SWRR Minister meets UN Resident Coordinator, WFP Country Director



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye shakes hands with WFP Myanmar Country Director Mr Stephen Anderson in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

UNION MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye separately received consisting of UN Resident Coordinator Mr Ola Almgren and WFP Myanmar Country Director Mr Stephen Anderson at his ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting with the UN Resident Coordinator, the Union Minister discussed social protection programmes, managing natural and man-made disasters, equal and unbiased rehabilitation, cooperation with UN agencies and resident offices to protect women and children

from violence in conflict areas, resettling internally displaced persons and closing down temporary relief camps through the implementation of the national strategic plan across the states and regions, cooperation with ASEAN, UN agencies and other nations in Rakhine State, implementation of recommendations of Rakhine State, short and long-term humanitarian aid processes, and continued cooperation with relevant UN agencies for socioeconomic development and cohesive existence.

During the meeting with the WFP Myanmar Country Direc-

tor, the Union Minister discussed social protection programmes, disaster management, systematic use of technology in ensuring effectiveness of monetary aid for rehabilitation and cooperation for the formation of a news exchange system for managing it, supplying food to conflict areas such as Rakhine State and monitoring their effectiveness, possibility of producing nutritious rice in supplying humanitarian aid, and providing greater aid to people with disabilities in temporary relief camps.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



# Fishery exports cross \$195.6 mln in 2019-2020 FY

EXPORT earnings from the fisheries sector during the period from 1 October to 6 December in the 2019-2020 financial year reached US\$195.6 million, an increase of \$25.4 million from the year-ago period, according to statistics released by the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar exports fisheries products, such as fish, prawns, and crabs, to markets in 40 countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, the US, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, and countries in the European Union.

Earlier, only fish caught in the wild were allowed to be exported to the EU market. At present, Myanmar is exporting farmed fish, prawns, and crabs to the EU.

Saudi Arabia's suspension of fish imports from Myanmar, beginning April last year, has affected rohu fish suppliers. Myanmar keeps only 25 per cent of rohu fish for local consumption and exports the remaining 75 per



Labourers processing fish for export in a marine product factory. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

cent to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, as well as Bangladesh.

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) is making concerted efforts to increase fishery

export earnings by developing fish farming lakes which meet international standards and adopting advanced fishing techniques.

There are over 247,000 acres

of fish farms and 240,000 prawn breeding farms across the country. Myanmar exported 340,000 tons of fishery products worth \$530 million in the 2013-2014FY,

330,000 tons worth \$480 million in the 2014-2015FY, 360,000 tons worth \$500 million in the 2015-2016FY, 430,000 tons worth \$600 million in the 2016-2017FY, 560,000 tons worth \$700 million in the 2017-2018FY, and over 580,000 tons in the 2018-2019FY, according to the Commerce Ministry.

An MFF official said the federation has asked the government to tackle problems faced in the export of farm-raised fish and prawns through G2G pacts and ensure smooth freight movement between countries to bolster exports.

According to the MFF, integrated poultry and fish farming cannot ensure food safety, which is a requirement for export. Therefore, the federation has asked for the formulation of a law to restrict that kind of mixed farming. Fish farming must be conducted as a large-scale project to get access to Project Bank loans, according to the MFF — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## Japan, ROK firms discuss investments in livestock sector

By Nyein Nyein

ENTERPRISES from Japan and the Republic of Korea have discussed investments in the livestock sector with Myanmar authorities, said U Thant Sin Lwin, Director-General of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) at a recent press meet at the DICA office.

Japanese and Korean investors discussed investment rules and regulations for dairy prod-

ucts and fish farming, he added.

"They discussed investment-related matters in Yangon Region. They said they would like to engage in fish and dairy farming businesses. They also asked about investment opportunities and importing of raw materials. Furthermore, they wanted to know more about investment protection rules. We discussed them about investment opportunities under the Myanmar Investment Law," said U Thant Sin Lwin.

Since the 1988-1989 financial year, 50 enterprises from 14 countries have brought investments of US\$514.936 million in livestock sectors as of November, 2019-2020FY. Myanmar's livestock sector has attracted investments from Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, South Korea, the UK, Viet Nam, the Netherlands, Malaysia, Japan, India, Brunei, Australia, and Italy.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## Manufacturing exports soar to \$1.75 bln as of 6 Dec

EXPORTS of finished industrial goods touched a high of US\$1.75 billion between 1 October and 6 December in the current financial year, an increase of \$339.6 million compared with the corresponding period of the previous financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

As per figures provided by the ministry, the exports of finished industrial goods totaled \$1.4 billion during the same period in the 2018-2019FY.

Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated

in garment and textiles produced on the cutting, making, and packaging (CMP) basis, and it contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

The CMP industry has emerged as a very promising one in the export sector. The value of CMP exports was just \$850 million in the 2015-2016 FY, but it tripled within two years to reach \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY, as per figures provided during the Myanmar Global Investment Forum 2018, held on 12 September.

In the first month of the

current financial year, exports of clothes produced under the CMP system topped \$320 million.

Japan is the largest market for Myanmar apparel, followed by the European Union.

The Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association has more than 500 members, and garment factories in Myanmar employ more than 500,000 workers. Investors prefer to invest in cheap-labor countries like Myanmar. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## Platinum Pathein Project Phase 2: Construction of fair-cost housing to begin in March

By Nyein Nyein

FAIR-COST housing, a sub-project under Phase 2 of the Platinum Pathein Project, will be implemented in March next year, said Daw Win Lei Kyi, business development director with FORTUMAX Company.

The Platinum Pathein Project is being developed in two phases: Phase 1 and Phase 2. While villas and plazas were constructed in Phase 1, hotels, restaurants, parks, three-storeyed buildings, four-storeyed buildings, and fair-cost housing projects will come up in Phase 2 of the project.

"The Platinum Pathein Project aims to create a livable, good environment, and improve the living standards in Pathein Town. There will be fun-fair events like Yangon. The shopping centres and three-star hotels in the project will also help create

jobs for local people," said Daw Win Lei Kyi.

The project is being implemented with the approval of the Ayeyawady Region government. It is located on 15.28 acres of land on Yangon-Pathein-Chaungtha-Ngwehsaung Road.

The FORTUMAX Company is holding a land grant with 30 years' validity, and has been authorized to use farmland for other purposes. The land grant can be extended by another 30 years.

"The construction work under Phase 1 has been completed 100 per cent. Permissions (for the projects) were taken individually," said admin executive Nang Si Monn Tip, MYA BAY Development Company.

The Platinum Pathein Project began in early 2015, and it is slated to be completed in 2023.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Over 190,000 anti-venom vials distributed in 2018-2019FY: Union Minister

OVER 190,000 vials of anti-venom to treat viper and cobra bites have been distributed domestically in the 2018-2019 fiscal year to prevent any shortfall of the drugs, said Dr. Myint Htway, the Union Minister for Health and Sports.  
Over 170,000 vials of anti-venom to treat Russell’s viper ‘mwe bwe’ bites and over 22,000 vials to cure Monocellate cobra ‘mwe hoc’ bites have been distributed in the fiscal year.

“We know some cases of snake bites. In order to prevent shortage of anti-venom, a total of 22,107 vials for cobra bites were distributed in the 2018-2019 FY. Also, a total of 177,420 vials were distributed for viper bites,” he added.  
“The Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory (MPF) in Insein has been producing liquid anti-venom, which can be stored

only between 2°C and 8°C. Now, MPF is freeze-drying anti-venom because some village clinics do not have access to electricity, and the vials can be stored at normal temperature. Both liquid and freeze-dried anti-venom has been distributed in the market,” said Dr. Myint Htwe.  
“In Myanmar, farmers are most vulnerable to snake bites. About 90 per cent of snake bites are inflicted by vipers and

about six per cent by cobras. The remaining snake bites can be attributed to other types of snakes,” according to the MPF (Insein).  
MPF anti-venom is distributed domestically and exported to some regional countries. In the current 2018-2019 FY, Myanmar has exported about 5,000 vials of anti-venom. —Aye Cho  
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Card payment systems installed on over 500 YBS buses

By Nyein Nyein

CARD PAYMENT systems have been installed on more than 500 YBS buses to allow passengers to pay bus fares using e-ticketing machines, said U Hla Aung, joint secretary of the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).  
“To implement the card payment system, four companies — Yangon Urban Public Transport (YUPT), Yangon Bus Public Company (YBPC), Bandoola Company, and Shwe Taung Paing Company — will install card payment systems on board 1,500 YBS buses. Currently, the systems have been installed on 544 YBS buses. The remaining YBS buses will install this system no later than 27 December,” he added.  
“We will install the machines. Then, the QC team will inspect the buses. If the buses pass our inspection, we will let them continue. If the buses fail to pass, we will check them again. Our three teams, the related companies, and Asia Starmar are supervising the work in order to ensure systematic and accurate installation of the machines under the



Automated e-ticket machine installed on the YBS bus. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

agreement. So, they are working to meet the target for the installation of card payment system machines by 27 December,” said U Hla Aung.  
The installed machines will be allowed for public use after they are checked by the responsible officials, he added.  
Upon completion of the installation on board 1,500 YBS buses in the initial stage, the authorities will make efforts to

install the machines on board about 1,000 more YBS buses in the second stage.  
“According to the target plan, the machines will be installed on board 1,500 YBS buses this year. We will also try to install the machines on board more buses. Also, the machines that are to be installed on board 1,039 Foton vehicles, including Scania, have already arrived. We will try our best,” said U Hla Aung.

To improve transport facilities in Yangon, the Yangon Bus Service system (YBS) was launched on 16 January, 2017, during the incumbent government’s term. At present, over 100 bus lines are operating 4,500 buses on about 135 routes, along with the airport shuttle and city transit. The number of daily commuters has been estimated at 1.8 million.  
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Myanmar to grant visa-on-arrival to tourists from five more countries

TOURISTS from Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, and New Zealand will be granted visas-on-arrival (VOAs) at a cost of US\$50 at the Yangon, Mandalay, and Nay Pyi Taw international airports from 1 January, 2020 to 31 December, 2022, under a three-year trial.  
Starting 1 January, ordinary passport holders from the five countries would no longer re-

quire pre-arranged approval. The new visas will allow tourists visits of up to 30 days in Myanmar and will cost US\$50 per person. The tourists will be allowed to visit Myanmar under the visa-on-arrival programme. The programme will not cover tourists who need to extend their visas.  
Tourists from Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary,

Luxembourg, and New Zealand entering Myanmar using visas-on-arrival will have to respect and obey Myanmar’s existing laws. The tourists would be allowed to travel anywhere in Myanmar freely, except to restricted areas. Travellers entering Myanmar through the international airport under the visa-on-arrival programme would be able to depart from

any of the international gates.  
The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism recently released data showing that from January to September this year, more than 1.3 million foreign tourists visited Myanmar.  
The number of visitors increased by 390,000, or 41 per cent, compared to the same period last year.—GNLM



UEC, IFES hold workshop on disinformation, hate speech against women candidates in 2020 general elections

THE Union Election Commission and International Foundation for Electoral Systems-IFES held Preliminary consultation for a joint awareness campaign for countering disinformation and hate speech against women candidates for the 2020 general elections in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

It was attended by members of the UEC, officials of the UEC’s subordinate offices in regions and states, officials of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, CSOs and international organiza-

tions. Speaking at the meeting, UEC Chairman U Hla Thein said equality is the basic principal for a democratic society, and participating in the elections and voting are the rights for all men and women.

He continued to say that women will also compete in the 2020 general elections, adding that out of 3,069 candidates in the 2010 general elections, 127 were women, and out of 6,038 candidates in the 2015 general elections, 800 were women.

As more women are

expected to compete in the 2020 general elections, elections should meet the democratic norms. As the 2020 general elections is drawing near, it is needed to prevent disinformation and hate speech against women candidates and to promote equality in the elections.

The UEC is implementing the policy on gender equality and promoting the role of women 2019-2022. The UEC Chairman has called for promoting the raising awareness and educating the people as part of efforts for preventing disin-

formation and hate speech against women candidates.

He continued to say that use of social media is high in Myanmar, and possible attacks on women candidates with disinformation and hate speech can impact not only women candidates but also the general elections.

The UEC is working together with the Ministry of Information, Myanmar Press Council and Facebook team to prevent fake news and hate speech.

The UEC also formed



Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein addresses the workshop in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

the information team releasing weekly true news.

The UEC Chairman urged the participants of the workshop to discuss

ways for preventing disinformation and hate speech against women in the elections.—MNA

(Translated by KZL)

Myanmar Police Force explain ‘Victoria’ toddler case in press conference



THE Myanmar Police Force held a press conference on the ‘Victoria’ toddler sexual case at their headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the press conference, Police Brig-Gen Soe Naing Oo of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), CID Director Police Col Min Han, CID Head Police Col Thar Tun, and DNA Department Head

Dr Chit Pan explained the investigation of suspects, gathering evidence and witnesses, how the case was constructed and submitted to court.

Police Brig-Gen Soe Naing Oo said they had gathered eyewitnesses, evidence and remarks from relevant experts to construct the case before seeking legal advice. He said the filed the case un-

der Section 376 of the Penal Code according to legal advice received. He said while witnesses and evidence were being examined in court, the main suspect was released on 18 December 2019. He said seven key witnesses and important evidence from the plaintiff’s side remained to be examined. He said they had expected examination of all witnesses and evidence to

be complete before a decision would be made. He said the Myanmar Police Force decided to hold this press conference because they think the court’s decision to release the suspect, according to the Code of Criminal Procedure, Section 253, was premature.

Next, Police Col Min Han replied to questions from domestic and foreign media. He said it is the duty of the police to get to the truth of the case and they are also the ones wishing for it the most. He said there is no one controlling things from behind the scene and said he can confidently say the CID are acting freely and independently.

The Police Colonel said Myanmar Police Force does not have a mandate to have every case filed be found guilty. He said the po-

lice force did their best to construct the case and it is the matter of the judge who used his rationality to make the decision to release the suspect before charges could be filed. He said the police are only tasked with filing the case and not administering justice, and that is why they will observe the court’s verdict before pursuing further action in line with the law.

He also mentioned that he submitted the original medical documents to the court and that it was not misplaced or lost as the court only accepts original documents and not copies.

Police Brig-Gen Soe Naing Oo then said that the purpose of this press conference only aimed to explain the discharging of the suspect as an accused. He said they seek to explain

the police’s processes and the consideration of the court. He said they hoped for the court to act only after examining everything submitted by the plaintiff. He said the relevant court has not made a verdict yet, but the police force will only pursue further action in line with existing laws after a verdict has been reached and observed.

Next, Police Col Thar Tun said they had examined all possible suspects before the case was even submitted to court. He said the charges were made after careful examination of witnesses and evidence. He said 27 people including the plaintiff have been submitted to court but only 20 have been examined while 7 remain.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (030W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (030W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-12-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING  
PTE., LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V DA QING XIA

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V DA QING XIA VOY. NO. (41) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-12-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-5 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S COSCO SHIPPING  
SPECIALIZED CARIZER CO LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NEW VICTORY

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NEW VICTORY VOY. NO. (04/2019) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20-12-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of WILMAR where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
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AGENT FOR: M/S MED SEA MARITIME DENIZ  
ACENTELIGI LTD STI

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## China, S Korea and Japan leaders to discuss N Korea tensions

BEIJING — Chinese, Japanese and South Korean leaders will discuss a potential free-trade deal and tensions over the North Korean nuclear issue when they meet in southern China next week, officials said Thursday.

Chinese Premier Li Ke-qiang will host South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for the meeting in Chengdu on Tuesday.

The visiting leaders will also hold separate talks with President Xi Jinping, Chinese vice foreign minister Luo Zhaohui told reporters at a briefing.

The meeting of regional powers comes as tensions have risen between Washington and Pyongyang after North Korea carried out a series of rocket

launches.

Nuclear talks between the North and the United States have been largely stalled since the collapse of a February summit in Hanoi between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Pyongyang has issued a year-end ultimatum, promising an ominous “Christmas gift” if Washington does not come up with some concessions.

China, an old ally of Pyongyang, introduced a draft joint UN resolution with Russia this week seeking to lift some of the punitive measures that have been enforced on North Korea over its nuclear activities.

Tuesday’s summit will aim to “have a constructive effect on achieving peace and stability on



Tensions have risen between Washington and Pyongyang after North Korea carried out a series of rocket launches. **PHOTO: AFP**

the Korean peninsula”, Luo said, adding however that the leaders would not be discussing the proposed UN resolution.

There are also tensions between Japan and South Korea, as their ties have deteriorated

over Tokyo’s use of forced labour during World War II.

The diplomatic friction has resulted in tit-for-tat trade restrictions and the scrapping of a military information-sharing pact between the two.—AFP ■

## NEWS In BRIEF

**Verdict says Musharraf’s body to be hanged at Islamabad’s D-Chowk for 3 days if dies before execution**

ISLAMABAD — The Special Court, which pronounced death sentence to Pervez Musharraf on Tuesday, has written in its 167-page detailed verdict that the body of the former military dictator would be dragged to and hanged at D-Chowk in Islamabad if he died before the execution of his death sentence.

For the first time in Pakistan’s recent history, a special court, earlier this week, handed a death sentence to a former military general in a high treason court. As per the detailed verdict, cited by Pakistan Today, “The then Corps Commanders Committee in addition to all other uniformed officers who were guarding him each and every time, with boots on, are equally and fully involved in the act and deeds of the accused person.” “As a necessary corollary to what has been observed, we find the accused guilty as per charge. The convict be hanged by his neck till he dies on each count as per charge,” the verdict said.—ANI ■

**PM Modi meets Portuguese counterpart Antonio Costa at Hyderabad House**

NEW DELHI — Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met his Portuguese counterpart Antonio Costa at Hyderabad House.

This is the third meeting between the two leaders in the last three years. Costa is on a two-day visit to India on an invitation extended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend the second meeting of the Organising Committee on the celebrations for the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Organising Committee meeting would be presided over by President Ram Nath Kovind.

Costa’s present visit to India is his first bilateral visit outside Europe after being re-elected as the Prime Minister on October 6, 2019.—ANI ■

## China to waive tariffs on US chemical products



This photo taken on 30 August, 2016 shows Chinese workers walking across the grounds at a chemical factory in Yichang, central China’s Hubei province. **PHOTO: AFP**

BEIJING — China will exempt some US chemical products from import tariffs, the Finance Ministry said Thursday, a sign of goodwill as the two countries continue efforts at easing their prolonged tit-for-tat tariff war.

The exemption list, which includes six chemical products such as plastics and adhesives, will take effect on 26 December for one year, the ministry said in a statement.

Beijing and Washington agreed last week on a much-anticipated phase-one trade deal, in which Washington agreed to phase out existing tariffs on Chinese goods in return for China purchasing more US agricultural products.

As a result, both sides suspended planned additional tariffs on Sunday but kept in place those already imposed. The deal has yet to be formally signed as the two countries have to “complete necessary procedures, such as legal review and translation proofreading as soon as possible,” according to the Chinese government.—Kyodo News ■

## Philippine court convicts political clan members over 2009 massacre

MANILA — A Philippine court convicted on Thursday the principal suspects in the murder of 58 people in 2009 at the southern Philippine island of Mindanao, sentencing each of the accused to 40 years in prison.

The Quezon City Regional Trial Court found members of the Ampatuan political clan, including former governor Zaldy Ampatuan, former mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr., Anwar Ampat-

uan Sr., Anwar Ampatuan Jr., and Anwar Sajid Ampatuan, guilty of the massacre that happened just over a decade ago.

On 23 November, 2009, a convoy of vehicles carrying lawyers, members of the media, supporters and relatives of then Vice Mayor Esmael Mangudadatu were on their way to file paperwork for his candidacy for the local elections in Maguindanao province.

They were stopped and accosted by members of the powerful Ampatuan family, along with around 100 of their men, who abducted and killed the victims before burying them in shallow graves nearby.

The court also handed down the same verdict to 10 other people, sentencing them all to prison terms of 40 years “reclusion perpetua,” meaning without the possibility of parole.



Zaldy Ampatuan. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

They were also ordered to pay compensation to the heirs of the victims.—Kyodo News ■



# Jerusalem cable car controversy hangs over Old City

JERUSALEM — Ramparts of ochre stone stand out against the sky, framed by hilltop buildings and olive trees — but the view of Jerusalem's Old City could soon include cable cars and pylons.

Israel has approved a project to ferry visitors from western Jerusalem to near the Western Wall, the holiest place Jews are allowed to pray but part of one of the world's most contentious sacred sites.

Supporters of the 200 million shekel (\$57 million) plan say it will ease the congestion and pollution caused by millions of visitors a year.

But archeologists, architects and city planners say the scheme, if completed, will be a blight on Jerusalem's ancient heritage.

The Western Wall is directly adjacent to the Al-Aqsa mosque, one of the holiest sites in Islam, but also located on the Temple



Israel has approved a plan to build a cable car to ferry visitors from western Jerusalem to near the Western Wall. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Mount, the most sacred place in Judaism. Lying in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem, the site is at the heart of the Israeli-Pal-

estinian conflict. The number of visitors to the Holy City has doubled in less than five years to around four million in 2019,

according to the Israeli tourism ministry, which initiated the cable car project. The 1.4 kilometre (0.8 mile) line “will change the face

of Jerusalem, offering tourists and visitors easy and comfortable access to the Western Wall”, minister Yariv Levin said when it was approved last year.

But the project, set to open by 2021, faces a backlash.

“Jerusalem is not Disneyland, its landscape and heritage are not for sale,” 70 Israeli architects, archaeologists and academics wrote in an open letter to the government before it was adopted. Israel occupied the West Bank and Jerusalem's predominantly Palestinian east, including the flashpoint holy sites of the Old City, during the 1967 Six Day War.

It later annexed east Jerusalem in a move never recognised by the international community.

The Palestinians see east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state, but Israel has declared the whole city its undivided capital.— AFP ■

## Peru's Fujimori in political pause ahead of new court hearing

LIMA — Peruvian opposition leader Keiko Fujimori, released last month after more than a year in pre-trial custody, announced Wednesday she would take a break from politics, before a new detention hearing in her corruption case.

Fujimori, 44, is accused of accepting \$1.2 million in illicit funding for her 2011 election campaign from Brazilian construction giant Odebrecht.

The hearing to decide on a potential new 36-month pre-trial detention term will be held on December 26, the day after Christmas.

“I am going to pause my political activities because my priority is and will always be my family,” Fujimori said in a televised statement.

“We will face this process as a whole family.”

After her release in November, she theoretically had time to campaign for presidential elections set for July 2021.

Once Peru's most popular politician, she rejected accusations that she was a flight risk and posed a danger of obstruction to prosecutor Jose Domingo Perez's investigations.

The 44-year-old eldest daughter of disgraced former president Alberto Fujimori was taken into pre-trial detention in October 2018 for allegedly inter-

fering with the anti-corruption investigation.

Her release last month by the Constitutional Court came in a ruling related only to her detention and which has no bearing on the corruption case against her.

On Wednesday Fujimori said there is “no flight risk because the judges determined it” and the Constitutional Court that released her ruled out the presumed dangers of obstruction.

“It's the most perverse gift that I have ever received in my life,” the leader of the right-wing Popular Force party said of the new pre-trial detention hearing which awaits her.

Fujimori added she was worried for her two daughters and keeping them in mind would give her strength to face the judicial process.

“We are going to show this is persecution, and we will also show our truth,” she said.

Perez believes there is new information against Fujimori, which he believes would increase the risk of flight and obstruction of justice.

The prosecutor is seeking to file multiple new accusations against her, including money laundering and obstruction of justice.

Odebrecht has admitted paying at least \$29 million to Peruvian officials since 2004, and bribing four former Peruvian presidents.

But the Odebrecht scandal stretches far beyond Peru.

Latin America's largest construction firm has admitted to paying hundreds of millions of dollars in bribes to win juicy contracts in 12 countries.— AFP ■



Keiko Fujimori (c) is pictured in November 2019 after her release from pre-trial detention on corruption allegations. **PHOTO: AFP**



Cuba President Miguel Diaz-Canel (left) and Communist Party First Secretary Raul Castro will be involved in naming a prime minister. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Cuba to name first prime minister in 40 years

HAVANA — Cuba is to resurrect the position of prime minister in a parliamentary session at the end of the week, with President Miguel Diaz-Canel nominating a candidate to the post which has remained dormant for more than 40 years.

The last time Cuba had a prime minister, it was revolutionary hero Fidel Castro.

However the position was abolished in 1976 when Castro transitioned to the presidency, taking over from Osvaldo Dorticos after the country's constitution was restructured.

No one knows yet who will be appointed, and the general public is in the dark as to what the role will even entail.

“I don't know what his func-

tions will be, I imagine that he'll be helping that poor Diaz-Canel who never stops, going here and there trying to sort out the country,” said Maria Fernandez, a 65-year-old pensioner.

Parliament will meet on Friday and Saturday before appointing the prime minister based on a proposal by Diaz-Canel.

The new official will become “head of government” for a five-year term. Diaz-Canel's nomination must then receive an absolute majority in a National Assembly vote, according to the country's new constitution, which was approved in April. The appointment will also have to be ratified by the omnipotent Communist Party led by former president Raul Castro.— AFP ■



## Cycling competition to be held in Pyapon next month

WITH the aim of encouraging a new generation of cyclists, a cycling competition will be held in Pyapon, Ayeyawady Region on 5 January, according to Bicycle Network Myanmar.

The competition will be a mountain bike tourney type and it is being supervised by the Pyapon Cycling Group.

Interested cyclists can register for the competition or make inquiries by calling these numbers: 09-422744044, 09-422452250, and 09-428590140. Registrations end 4 January, according to Bicycle Network Myanmar.

Officials will accommodate the away competitors in Pyapon during the tourney, according to the Pyapon Cycling Group.

The competition will have three categories: for competitors in the 18-35 age group, competitors over 35 years of age, and professional (freelance) cyclists.

The winners will get K200,000, while the first runners-up will be awarded K150,000, and the second runners-up will be given K100,000.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

## Number One Cup: Myanmar U-20 team return home with bronze medal

THE Myanmar U-20 men's national football team arrived at the Yangon International Airport yesterday after winning the bronze medal at the Viet Nam U-20 BTV-International Football Tournament: Number One Cup.

The tourney was held at Binh Duong, Viet Nam from 14 to 18 December.

Four teams competed in the tourney — host Viet Nam's U-20 men's football team, the Myanmar U-20 team, the Cambodia U-20 team, and Viet Nam's Becamex Binh Duong Football Club.

As there were only four teams competing, two teams entered the semifinal stage, and the winners played for the championship in the final.

In the semifinal stage, team Myanmar lost to Becamex Binh Duong Football Club by a 4-5 penalty play result. Myanmar next faced



The Myanmar U-20 footballers are welcomed by officials at the Yangon International Airport after winning the bronze medal in Viet Nam's Number One Cup. **PHOTO: MFF**

the Cambodia U-20, which had suffered a loss against the Viet Nam U-20 team in another semifinal match.

In the bronze medal match, a hat-trick by Myanmar

youth star La Min Htwe and a goal by Hein Htet Aung helped team Myanmar win over Cambodia with a decisive 4-2 result.

The bronze medalists were

welcomed by officials from the Myanmar Football Federation and Myanmar football fans at the Yangon International Airport yesterday.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

## Japanese star Minamino signs for Liverpool

LONDON—Japanese international Takumi Minamino signed for Champions League holders Liverpool on Thursday for a reported fee of £7.25 million (\$9.5 million) from Austrian outfit Red Bull Salzburg, the Premier League leaders announced.

The 24-year-old forward -- who impressed Liverpool in their two Champions League

group matches this season with the Austrian side -- is believed to have signed a four-and-a-half-year contract.

"Liverpool Football Club can confirm an agreement has been reached with Red Bull Salzburg for the transfer of Takumi Minamino," the club said in a statement on their website. Minamino -- who scored

in the 4-3 defeat by Liverpool at Anfield in October -- said it fulfilled a dream.

"It has been a dream, my dream to become a Liverpool player," he told Liverpool.com.

"And I'm so excited that the moment has come true.

"To play in the Premier League was one of my targets. "I think this is the top-class league in the world; I was thinking if my career as a footballer progressed smoothly, someday I would be able to play in the Premier League.

"But I never thought I would be able to play in this team and I'm really happy about it."

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said Minamino was a courageous player.

"He is very quick and a very brave player," said Klopp.

"He is brave with the ball but also brave without the ball."

Liverpool -- whose senior squad are preparing for Saturday's Club World Cup final in Qatar -- activated Minamino's release clause last week.—AFP



Minamino's move brings an end to his five-year spell with Salzburg, whom he joined from Cerezo Osaka in January 2015. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Arteta speculation spikes as Arsenal cancel press conference

LONDON — Arsenal are expected to appoint Manchester City assistant coach Mikel Arteta as their new manager in the next 24 hours after postponing Thursday's scheduled press conference.

Interim boss Freddie Ljungberg was expected to face the media at the club's training ground at 1:30 pm (1330 GMT) to preview the Gunners' trip to Everton on Saturday.

The Swede has taken charge of Arsenal since Unai Emery was sacked on November 29, but has overseen just one victory in his five-match tenure.

A 3-0 defeat at home to Manchester City on Sunday left the club seven points off fourth-placed Chelsea and the same number off the bottom three.

It led to the Arsenal hierarchy stepping up their plans to appoint Emery's successor, with managing director Vinai Venkatesham pictured outside Arteta's house in the early hours of Monday.

It is understood City are un-

happy that Arsenal did not ask for permission to speak to Arteta and are especially annoyed because Pep Guardiola's side played at the Emirates on Sunday and no approach was made when club officials met.

City, however, do not have an issue with the 37-year-old and will allow him to make his own decision.

Arteta was alongside Guardiola on Wednesday as the Premier League champions won 3-1 at Oxford to reach the League Cup semi-finals.

Guardiola said after the match: "There was no change. I don't have any news. We prepared the game as best as possible. Before, during and now after and we did it.

"I spoke (Tuesday). My press conference I had 48 questions and 35 were about Mikel so I don't have to say anything more until there is news. When there is news, in my next (press) conference when you ask me something I will answer."—AFP