

■ NATIONAL

Vice President addresses MTP ceremony on the development of trade sector

► PAGE 3

■ NATIONAL

Maungtau women alleging rape interviewed by journalists

► PAGE 2



■ ANALYSIS

Bright rays of peace shining on Myanmar

► PAGE 8

■ NATIONAL

Performances in one-year period of MOFA and Rakhine State Government

► PAGES 5+6,11+12

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TOGETHER WITH THE PEOPLE

State Counsellor: thanks to people

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed thanks to the people for their understanding of the incumbent government, pledging that the one-year-old administration would continue to march on the road to establishing a federal union with eternal peace and introducing a new motto: "Together with the people".

In a speech aired on state television last night to commemorate the first year of her National League for Democracy (NLD) in office, she also asked for support from the people. She also expressed her thanks to the people for their patience and understanding of her government in its first year amid criticisms of the NLD government.

Regarding the achievements by the NLD-led government in the past year, she said her government promulgated laws that could give protection to the people. At the

same time, the government changed or removed some laws that used to suppress the people.

The State Counsellor said spending on healthcare was increased, and guaranteed that the effort was not fruitless. In a one-year period, the development of public health care is improving rapidly, to the extent that the world acknowledged Myanmar's progress. Significant gains have been made in eradicating tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. The accomplishment in healthcare earned the praise of the international organization Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which helps in the fight to eradicate the three major diseases.

Starting now, she said the government will mainly concentrate on the tasks of job creation, better transportation and increased access to electric power.—GNLM



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers a speech to commemorate the first year in office of her National League for Democracy (NLD). PHOTO: MNA

The full text of the speech of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be published in tomorrow's issue of the Global New Light of Myanmar.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor

Press Release

(3rd Waxing of Tagu 1378 ME)
(30th March 2017)

1. The Union Government has been implementing the national reconciliation and peace process with special focus. And, it has been making concerted efforts for national ethnic armed groups which have not yet signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement—NCA to take part in Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panlong, after building up mutual trust and understanding. According to the nature of peace

dialogues, one year has already passed with high points and low points.

2. The main point of the dialogues for peace is trust. Here mutual trust is of great importance, as is self-confidence. As a result of the strenuous efforts and negotiations for one year, 5 member groups of United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC)— Karen National Progressive Party (KNPP), New Mon State Party (NMSP), Arakan National Council (ANC), Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) and Wa National Organization (WNO) disclosed this evening that they would sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
3. National Reconciliation and Peace which the national ethnic races and union citizens have been yearning for successive eras is now seeing red rays of hope spraying forth with brilliant colours. At such a time of great importance, undesirable destructive elements and instigations intended to harm peace might emerge. Therefore, this press release is being issued to urge our brothers who are leaders of the ethnic national races and Union citizens to be extremely careful.



သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Maungtaw women alleging rape interviewed by journalists

FOREIGN and local journalists who are being allowed to independently report the news from Maungtaw have interviewed three women who claim they were raped three months ago by security forces.

The media group visited No. 1 Border Guard Police Headquarters that had been attacked in October and nearby villages in Maungtaw Township — Kyikanpyin, Wapeik, Aungmingalar, Pharwattchaung, Pyintphyuchaung, Kyarkaungtaung, Kyatyoeypin, Ngarsakyu, Pyaungpye, -- and collected information about socio-economic improvement, local development, rule of law, stability, accidental fires and residents who had returned after fleeing because of the violent attacks that occurred on October 9, 2016.

During the trip that the three women from Kyatkaungtaung village allegedly told journalists that they were raped by security forces three months ago. It was learnt that responsible persons will investigate the matter to uncover the truth.

The media group conducted by the Ministry of Information will independently cover news from 28 March to 1 April. The media are TV Asahi, the BBC, the VOA, EPA, Nippon, Fuji



Members of media interview local women in Maungtaw, Rakhine State on 30th March 2017. PHOTO: MNA

TV, Central News Bureau, Frontier Myanmar, Myanmar News Agency, Myanmar Alin and Kyaeon. A total of 18 journalists made the trip, led by General Manager U Ye Naing from the News and Periodicals Enterprise.

Similar events have transpired in Pyaungpye and Kyatyoeypin villages, said U Ye Htut,

Chairman of the Maungtaw District Management Committee.

“Daw Than Than of Kyatyoeypin Village reported a similar case when both media groups and the investigation Commission visited Rakhine. We reported to the Border Police Force so that legal action can be taken for the victim and they went on a field inspection to the village

on that very day. However the victimized female was found to have left the village after receiving compensation and after listening to voices of the village chief and elders the case was discontinued,” he added.

“We will properly handle the case in a legal manner. The three victims confessed to the media regarding the allegations

of being raped. It is necessary that the victims themselves file a lawsuit in order for the Border Police Force to move in for inspection. Anonymity will be given for safety reasons for witnesses if they were to give a testimony but the victims need to take responsibility for their own testimonies. If found to be guilty then the perpetrators will be given a fitting sentence in accord with the law,” said the chairman of the committee.

“If the victim personally testifies their sexual assault then immediate action will be taken, however responsibility needs to be taken for their own accusations,” he added. “Just verbally is not enough, the victims need to show firm evidences for their grievances. We need cooperation to take action against the perpetrator. We can’t put pressure on the victims,” said U Ye Htut.

“If they can say about when and where the event was happened, we can check out the list of the officials in that region and try to expose the perpetrators,” he said. “Concerning the current case, local women escorted the female victims to Ngakhuya police station to file a law suit. Now, they have returned to their respective villages,” he said. —Myanmar News Agency

Tarred road commissioned into service in Thongwa Township

A ceremony to open a new tarred road was held in Thongwa Township, Yangon Region yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing said that the ministry is implementing construction of roads and bridges in the regions and states in its first 5-year short term plan from April 2016 to March 2021. Six roads and three bridges will be built in Yangon Region through international aids, parliament's pledges and BOT system. The ministry had already constructed 637 mile and 6 furlongs long roads and 49 bridges above 180-ft in Yangon Region.

Bago-Thanatpin-Kayan-Thongwa-Thanyan Road and Yangon-Pathein Road Section are scheduled to be upgrade to tarred ones with the assistance of Asian Development Bank (ADB) commencing the fiscal year 2018-2019, he added. Thakayta Bridge is under construction with the help of the Japan and the detailed designs are being drawn up for the Dala Bridge with the fund contributed by the Korea and the project is expected to begin in the near future.

A feasibility study is being conducted for the No (3) Bago River Crossing Bridge that links

Thilawa SEZ and the newly inaugurated road will be first of its kind in Yangon Region in the time of new government, he said.

The union minister highlighted that the local products from Thilawa SEZ in Yangon Region and Bago Region can be easily exported to other regions in a short period of time without passing Yangon City. The new road will help improve socio-economic status of the local people and reduce poverty rate in rural area. In an attempt to ease traffic congestion and to reduce transportation charges, steps have been taken to allow the public to use nine bridges in Yangon Region free of charge starting from 1 April. He called for public participation for durability of the bridge.

Daw Nilar Kyaw, Yangon Regional Minister for Electricity, Industry and Road Transportation, the regional Hluttaw representatives, a town elder and an official from the Road Department formally opened the tarred road.

Then, the union minister, the regional minister and Thongwa Pyithu Hluttaw Representative Daw Su Su Lwin and guests posed for documentary photo and strolled along the tarred road.—Myanmar News Agency

Man missing in Maungtaw Township

A resident of Ywatnyo Taung Village, Maungtaw Township has been reported missing after he did not return from a trip to a nearby village.

Yar Yar, 23, left his home to visit Yethwin village on Wednesday at about 7am and did not return home. Security forces have been interrogating residents of Yethwin to learn what has happened to Yar Yar.

According to the interrogations of the villagers, it was learnt that Yar Yar was seen on Wednesday afternoon but was not seen by anyone in the evening.

Yar Yar's uncle has filed a case at the local police station and further investigation is ongoing by the police force. —Myanmar News Agency



Over 100 died in Malaysian detention camps, half from Myanmar

KUALA LUMPUR — More than one hundred foreigners died in the past two years in Malaysia's immigration detention centres from various diseases and unknown causes, most of them from Myanmar, according to documents from the government-funded National Human Rights Commission reviewed by Reuters.

The toll, which has not been previously disclosed, is based on Malaysian immigration depart-

ment data provided to the commission, which is known by its Malay acronym Suhakam.

There were 83 deaths in 2015, and at least 35 in 2016 up to Dec. 20.

It is unclear whether the death rate is higher than in neighbouring countries. Government officials in Indonesia and Thailand told Reuters they do not disclose such numbers.

The rate is higher than in major industrialised nations such

as the United States, which in the last financial year recorded 10 deaths in its immigration detention system, which has many more detainees than Malaysia's.

More than half of the 118 dead are from Myanmar, the source for tens of thousands of refugees coming to Malaysia, including Muslims from Rakhine State.

The number of Muslim fatalities in the camps is unknown. —Reuters

Vice President addresses Medium-term Programme (MTP) ceremony on the development of trade sector



Vice President U Myint Swe, centre, with participants at the ceremony. PHOTO: MNA

Vice President U Myint Swe addressed the gathering at a ceremony releasing the report on medium-term programme (MTP) on development of the trade sector held at the Hilton Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

“Today’s ceremony is the one for releasing the report on the medium-term programme (MTP) on the development of the trade sector that the World Bank and the Ministry of Commerce and Trade finally compiled as the additional working process of the report, ‘Diagnostic Trade Integration Study—DTIS.’ It is a work in progress under the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) for development of the trade sector of the least-developed countries from the World Trade Organization (WTO). The World Bank estimated today’s global economic progress at 2.9 per cent, decreasing to 2.4 per cent, actually. It was attributed to the slump of developed countries’ economic progress, the slumping of commodity prices, the decreasing rate of global trade demand, dropping trade demands in the advanced economic market and slowing down of capital flow. Global countries urgently need the new set-up of the world economy, due to the performances of balancing economic policy and slow-progress-

sive economic condition. A plan to be performed globally was laid down in the World Economic Forum, 2017” the Vice President said.

“According to the report released by the International Monetary Fund in 2016, Myanmar stood at second from the top of the economic progress rate, but the economy of the great powers in the Asia region became slow, with the slowing rate of global economy. In such a time, it is of great importance for our country to promptly unite with (other) countries, especially in the trade sector. Myanmar laid down 12 economic policies. In doing so, it drew up policies in accord with two destinations — creating job opportunities for everyone and upgrading sustainable economic development and emergence of strengthened types of consumption and production.

The Medium Term Programme will carry out the tasks of subsidizing technical aid on trade in five prioritised spheres needed for supporting the trade development sector in coming five years.”

Afterward, Dr Than Myint, Union Minister for Commerce said the aforementioned tasks are to be undertaken in the future.

“The Ministry of Commerce managed to make the assessment

for the first time, on ‘Diagnostic Trade Integrated Study—DTIS, in 2015’ in cooperation with the World Bank. MTP is the comprehensively-described report of Action Matrix to be performed in short term and medium term (2, 3 or 5 years) from various sectors for the trade sector development. It took time to draw up the (DTIS) report to be implemented in the short term and medium term. Besides, others DTISs—reports on strategy on national exports, reports on development in private sector, report on smooth and prompt actions in trade and report on ASEAN commodities and services were selected as prioritized sectors. Five major panels, 23 series of working process and over 180 prioritised enterprises to be implemented further were chosen as priorities.”

The ambassador of the EU, Roland Kobia and Country Manager of the World Bank, Mr Abdoulaye Seck, made welcoming speeches.

Present at the ceremony were U Hla Kyaw, deputy minister, representatives on economy and finance from Amyotha Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw, ministers for commerce of region and state cabinets, special guests from WB, and responsible officials from UMFCCL.—*Myanmar News Agency*

U Htin Lynn presents his credentials to President of the Swiss Confederation

U Htin Lynn, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Swiss Confederation, presented his Credentials to Her Excellency Mrs. Doris Leuthard, President of the Swiss Confederation on 28 March 2017, in Bern.—*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Maj-Gen James Hartsell congratulates Myanmar on government transition

A WORKSHOP on Media Relations during Crisis and Conflicts took place at the Thingaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday with an address by National Security Advisor U Thaung Tun.

In his address, National Security Advisor U Thaung Tun said that crisis and issues in Rakhine State are high on the agenda, and but the situation in Rakhine has improved considerably. As the border guard forces were violently attacked the security forces had to react in accordance with the law.

There is no human rights abuse and action will be taken against those who committed misdeeds. What we are doing at the moment is ensure peace and stability in the region and the next step is to develop infrastructure. At such a time, the workshop held today will contribute much to tackling crisis in the country.

Next, Maj-Gen James Hartsell, Director of Daniel K. Inouye Asian-Pacific Centre for Security Studies-DKI APCSS, USA said that he would like to recognize the historic success that Myanmar has achieved to date with its peaceful and relatively stable and sustainable political transition to a democratic form of government, adding that you are to be especially commended for your free, fair, peaceful, and orderly elections that took place in November 2015 which by the will of the

people transitioned what had been the opposition party at that time into the leadership role of the current government as well as for your continued and sustained dialogues on the national peace and reconciliation processes between the government and armed ethnic groups.

He continued that he recognized that there remains a long road ahead for the people and the government and much work still needs to be done due to complex challenges your nation faces in political, social, economic and national security areas.

He disclosed that some of the greatest challenges still faced are that some of the ethnic groups are armed and have refused to sign the ceasefire agreement and they have continued to actively resist the peace and reconciliation process that the majority have agreed to.

There is the challenge of the simmering communal tension in Rakhine State, and all of this has created a perception of insecurity and instability in Myanmar which has caused some key foreign investors to hold off on coming.

He went on to say that Myanmar is experiencing the same phenomenon that other nations have experienced, which is the implementation of press freedom and free speech, come additional layers of complexity in governing.—*Tha Sein*

The Second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge opens traffic to Vietnam, Laos and Thailand

THE Final Casting Ceremony for the Second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge was held at temporary briefing hall in Myawady, Kayin State on 30 March morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister for Construction U Win Khaing said that the bridge linking Myanmar with Vietnam, Laos and Thailand lies on East-West Economic Corridor. The bridge was constructed at a cost

of Baht 3,900 million with the assistance of Thai Government and the Traffic Change Over and Border Control Facilities (BCF) will be built by Thailand, he added. The Union Minister, Transport Minister of Thailand Dr. Arkhon Ternpittayapaisith, the speaker of Kayin State Hluttaw and officials opened the bridge.

The Mudon-Myawady concrete road was put into service in Myawady Township, Kayin State

on 30 March, with an address by Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

The Kayin State Hluttaw speaker, state-level ministers and officials from the Ministry of Construction cut the ribbon to open the new concrete road. Similarly, they opened Eindu-Zarthapyin Road and posed for documentary photo before strolling along the road.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than presents souvenir to Thai official at final casting of the 2nd Thai-Myanmar friendship bridge. PHOTO: MNA

LOCAL Business



A traffic police directs vehicles and mortorcycles in Mandalay. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHAINE

About 400 vehicles insured daily in Mandalay Region

AN average of about 400 vehicles are insured daily at Myanma Insurance in Mandalay Region, according to the insurance company.

There are currently about 300 to 600 cars for which owners pay for insurance daily at Myanma Insurance. About from 900 to 1,400 motorcycles are also insured, it is learnt.

Myanma Insurance offers policies that cover the compensation caused by car accidents, said Daw Khin Mar Cho, the manager of Myanma Insurance in Manda-

lay Region. The compensation for third-party insurance was paid at a meeting hall of Supervision Committee for Highway Express on 28th March, creating awareness of travel insurance and coverage.

"Previously, people did not realize well the benefit of the insurance", said U Aung Kyaw Lin, the chair of the Mandalay Region Supervisory Committee for Motor Vehicles. "Therefore, we want them to know about the benefits".

Trains, cars, motorcycles

and every other type of motor vehicle must be insured. Starting from 1st August 2016, Ks5,000 was set as the price for a one-year insurance premium for most vehicles, and Ks2,000, for motorcycles, it is learnt.

The Special Travel Insurance for Express Ways is compulsory for travellers to cover losses in case of unavoidable accidents. Travel insurance awareness campaigns are being conducted for vehicle owners and drivers, it is learnt.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Myawady border camp has largest trade value with ITC

THE Myawady border camp has the largest trade value of over Ks9.77 billion using the individual trading card (ITC) as of 17th March this fiscal year, followed by Kan Pike Tee with over Ks2.18 billion.

Trade value with ITC hit over Ks16.49 billion as of 17th March in the current fiscal year, according to statistics of the Commerce Ministry, with an export value of over Ks1.13 billion and an import value of over Ks15.37 billion.

The border trade values with the use of ITC as of 17th March in this FY were over Ks835million in Tamu, over Ks852million in Muse, over Ks9.78 billion in Myawady, Ks731million in Tachilek, over Ks30million in

Lweje, over Ks2.18 billion in Kan Pike Tee, over Ks381million in Kawthaung, over Ks708million in Reed, over Ks945million in Maw Taung and over Ks24million in Keng Tung and Ks29million in Maese, it is learnt.

The Trade Department issued 292 cards from 21st Nov 2012 to 31st March 2013, 261 cards in 2013-2014 FY, 317 cards in 2014-2015 FY, 146 cards in 2015-2016 and 209 cards as of 17th March in this FY, according to an announcement released by the ministry.

A businessman can trade Ks3million a day with an ITC, and the trade department granted trade up to Ks15million a day, which amounted to a five-day-trade-value.—*Ko Khant*

External trade value hit over US \$27 billion as of 17th March this FY

EXTERNAL trade value from 1st April to 17th March in the current fiscal year 2016-2017 amounted to US\$27.03 billion, which is up by US\$572.5 million when compared to a similar period last year.

Both export and import value showed an increase this year. Exports as of 17th March fetched US\$10.88 billion, whereas import value reached US\$16.15 billion, according to the official statistics provided by the Commerce Ministry. Myanmar exported agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and manufactured goods whereas capital goods, raw industrial materials and personal goods were

imported into Myanmar.

Trade values of US\$5.27 billion were in deficit so far in this FY when import surpassed export. There were trade deficits of US\$91.9million in 2012-2013, US\$2.55 billion in 2013-2014, US\$4.91 billion in 2014-2015 and US\$5.41 billion in 2015-2016, according to the statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO).

The government is putting forth a concerted effort so as to reduce the trade deficit by scrutinising luxury items, except the essential ones, according to the second five-year National Development Plan.—*Mon Mon*

Junction City Shopping Centre opens today

JUNCTION City Shopping Centre located at the corner of Bogyoke Street and Shwedagon Pagoda Street in Pabedan Township is officially open today, according to the markets department under Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC).

Over 50 per cent of the shops are open for business. All the stores will be open by the end of May, it was said at a news conference held at Junction City Tower on Wednesday. This centre includes over 240 shops, including boutiques, restaurants and cinemas. Junction City Tower is 23 storeys high and 33,400 square meter wide.

The project is jointly con-

ducted by Shwe Taung Development Co., Ltd, Keppel Land Company, Pan Pacific Hotels Groups and YCDC, with investments totalling US\$300million. Phase 1 of this project includes Junction City Shopping Center, Junction City Office Tower and Pan Pacific Hotel Yangon, the construction of which is slated to complete this year. Phase 2 includes premium service residence offices, a multi-storey car park and a basement car park, which will be completed in 2019.

YCDC granted permits to the previous owners of the shops after redevelopment of new Bogyoke market.—*Ko Htet*



Visitors are seen at Junction City Shopping Centre in Yangon. PHOTO: JUNCTION CITY YANGON

Performances in One-Year Period

MOFA- defending the interests of the nation and its people on the front lines of the international arena

Article – Khin Yadana
Photo – May Oo Moe – MOI

THIS period marks the auspicious 70th Anniversary of the founding of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) on 17th March 1947, as well as the one year in office of the new Government.

Defending and promoting the national interest

A country which has independence and sovereignty has the right to conduct foreign relations. As foreign relations plays a crucial role in defending and promoting the national interest, every country formulates its foreign policy based on and as an extension of its domestic policy.

The main duty of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to defend and promote the national interest and to protect the interests of the people. That is why during the one year term of the new Government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been pursuing the “people-centered diplomatic relations” approach which regard the people’s interest as top priority.

State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has given guidance that also as a good diplomat, he or she needs to consider not also the interests of own country but also the host country. Moreover, he or she needs to protect not only the interests of Myanmar citizens but also the interests of former Myanmar citizens and to treat them in a warm and friendly manner with a family spirit. The conduct and practice of diplomacy are to safeguard the sovereignty and national interest of the State and solve problems on the front line of international arena.

If diplomacy fails, the State may have to resort to war; that is why diplomacy is crucial.

It has been learnt from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the duty of diplomats was to use their intellectual and negotiations skills in the international arena to negotiate and solve problems that might have originated in their home countries.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, U Kyaw Tin said, “foreign relations is a process, and therefore just as there are positive developments that are visible, there are also positive developments which cannot yet



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addresses the 71st United Nations General Assembly in Manhattan, New York, U.S., on 21 September 2016.

be shown.”

It has been learnt that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has arranged for the visits of leaders and high-level delegations for the promotion of friendship and cooperation between Myanmar and other countries of the world. Furthermore, it has worked for increased and active participation in regional and international organizations. It has also put more efforts into cooperation with other countries to obtain technical, management skills and other forms of assistance for Myanmar’s transition towards democracy, the Peace Process and development.

Foreign Policy

The vision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which keeps at the forefront, is to promote the interests of the State and its citizens. It is implementing an active, independent and non-aligned foreign policy. In the conduct of its foreign policy, it adheres to the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence.

Goals and Objectives of the Ministry

The first year period of the new government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set two major goals and working extensively in achieving them. First is to promote friendly relations and to strengthen cooperation with all countries in the world and second is to uplift the image of Myanmar and her people at the international level.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs stated that “in working for first goal, promoting friendly relations and cooperation with all the countries in the world, we have worked

towards resolving human rights challenges while at the same time making sure that it would not harm our work in the area of National Reconciliation. During the new administration, Myanmar has been able to adopt an entirely new approach towards human rights. Under the new government, we were able to show that it places a high regard for human rights values. Instead of using confrontation, we have adopted a more positive and co-operative approach”.

For the achievement of the second goal, Myanmar has participated actively in international and regional organizations, showed her commitments by signing and ratifying the international conventions on Human Rights and Disarmament, and had increased efforts to protect the interest of Myanmar nationals and thus uplift the image of Myanmar.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has carried out the said duties in close consultation and coordination with its seven departments, Embassies, Missions, and Consulates-General.

Promotion of friendly relations with all countries of the world

Geographically, Myanmar serves as a bridge between South-east Asia and South Asia. From the viewpoint of geopolitics, Myanmar is strategically located between the two most populous and economically powerful countries in the region, the People’s Republic of China and India, and also shares borders with them.

Therefore, to promote and defend the national interest, Myanmar has been able to maintain

friendly relations not only with neighbouring countries but also with her traditional and new development partners which support her the path towards democracy. It is also learnt that during the first year of the new Government, in its efforts to promote friendship with other countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has arranged visits of the Heads of State and Government and High-Level Delegations from Myanmar and vice-versa, in a balanced manner.

President U Htin Kyaw paid friendly visits to Laos, India, Vietnam and Cambodia in 2016-2017. He also visited Russia to attend the 60th Anniversary Celebrations of ASEAN-Russia Relations, to Mongolia for the Asia-Europe (ASEM) 11th Summit Meeting, and to Thailand to sign the Condolence Book on the passing away of the King of Thailand.

The State Counsellor visited the countries in the eastern hemisphere namely Thailand, People’s Republic of China, Japan, Singapore and India. She also visited countries in the west namely the UK and USA. During her official visit to the United States of America, she also attended the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Moreover, State Counsellor also participated in the BRICS-BIMSTEC Summit meeting held in Goa, India.

During the 2016-2017 period, leaders from Singapore, Mongolia, Laos, Thailand and Cambodia visited Myanmar. In addition to this, Foreign Ministers from China, Canada, Italy, United States of America, India, Japan, Thailand, France, United Kingdom and Ukraine paid visits to Myanmar, totaling 20 visits at the Foreign Ministers level. It is also learnt that many high-level delegations from many countries are scheduled to visit Myanmar in the near future.

The President chose to pay a visit to Laos in 2016 as his first state visit because of the fact that Laos has assumed the chairmanship of ASEAN. This shows that Myanmar places great value on her relations with ASEAN.

Friendly visits of significant benefits

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs further explained that during the visit of the State Counsellor to the People’s Re-

public of China the following had been accomplished: Cooperation in the Economic and Technology sectors, building of the Kunlun bridge, donation of US\$ 3 million for Myanmar’s peace process, agreement reached for financial assistance of Chinese Yuan 1000 million for the health, education, agriculture, border area development sectors. Also, a mechanism was also established for China-Myanmar Foreign and Defence Ministries to have (2+2) high-level meetings.

So far, China-Myanmar (2+2) high-level meetings have been held for two times and matters relating to peace and stability in the border areas, the rule of law, joint resolution of border problems, and China to provide constructive assistance for the success of the peace process have been discussed.

In the area of Myanmar’s relations with India, friendly visits have been made by the President and State Counsellor to India, thus creating warm and friendly relations; from their side in accordance with the “Neighborhood First Policy”, they have given great emphasis to relations with Myanmar. During the President’s visit to India, MoU’s (Memorandums of Understanding) were signed for the building and upgrading of bridges and bridge approach slabs for the section of the Tamu-Kyigone-Kalewa Trilateral Highway in Myanmar and cooperation in the area of traditional medicine and renewable energy. Also, during the friendly visit of the State Counsellor to India, three MoU’s were successfully signed. The new government also reached an agreement with India to discuss long-standing agreements and matters relating to border affairs in a spirit of cooperation and consultation.

It is also learnt that during the visit of the State Counsellor to Thailand, Agreement on Border Crossing between the Two Countries, MoU on Labour Cooperation and Agreement on Employment of Workers were signed between the two countries. Other matters accomplished after consultation and cooperation were Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand, and the reactivation of the matters which have been left pending for a long time such as boundary demarcation works.

SEE PAGE 6 >>

PERFORMANCES IN ONE-YEAR PERIOD

>> FROM PAGE 5

During the visit of the State Counsellor to Singapore agreements were reached for the MoU extension of the Singapore-Myanmar Vocational Training Institute Agreement, Amendment of the Double Taxation Agreement between the two countries to be in conformity with the times, to give permission to Singaporean Airline "Silk Air" for stopover rights to run the Singapore-Yangon-Mandalay sector for a temporary test period of six months, signing of an agreement for Investment Promotion in both countries.

Also during the visit of the Prime Minister of Singapore to Myanmar, a MoU for the grant of 30 days entry visas to holders of ordinary passports was signed. This agreement has entered into force since 1 December 2016.

During the visit of the State Counsellor to Japan, the following agreements were reached: financial assistance of Japanese Yen 40 billion to support the democratization process in Myanmar and the National Reconciliation efforts -and financial assistance for the balanced development of urban and rural areas from the Japanese government and Japanese private sector investments totaling Japanese Yen 800 billion during a five-year period,

During the term of the new Government, the US-Myanmar relations was categorized as relationships among partners, and a new era of relations was opened. It has been learnt that during the visit to the USA of the State Counsellor, US-Myanmar relations was upgraded to the level of partners by providing support for human rights and the transition towards democracy and by reinforcing the friendly relations and elevating it to a higher level.

In October 2016, the US government terminated the National Emergency on Myanmar and the President revoked the Executive Order-based framework of the sanctions programme and lifted all sanctions imposed on Myanmar by the issuance of four Presidential Executive Orders. In addition, GSP - Generalized System of Preferences privileges were restored.

In accordance with the Myanmar-US Friendship and Partnership Agreement, the first Myanmar-US Partnership Meeting was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15 November 2016.

With regard to the European countries, Myanmar held Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with Switzerland and the Czech Republic during the one year period of the new government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has facilitated the donation from the European countries to the Joint Peace Fund, has made arrangements for the exchange of good experiences for the Myanmar Peace Process and has made arrangements for members of organizations working for the

peace process to go on field trips.

Diplomatic relations with over 120 countries

During the term of the new government, all necessary internal arrangements were made for the establishment of diplomatic relations with Guinea, Ecuador, Seychelles, Liberia, Holy See (Vatican), Malta, and the Marshall Islands. After that, the submission was made to the Fourth Regular Meeting of the Second Pyithu Hluttaw. Since approval had been received for the establishment of diplomatic relations with the said countries, Myanmar will now have diplomatic relations with 120 countries.

Continued participation within ASEAN

Myanmar has been a member of ASEAN for the past 20 years. For nearly two decades, continued criticism and pressure were exerted on ASEAN because of Myanmar's human rights and democracy record. It was thus believed within ASEAN that Myanmar was a hindrance to ASEAN's efforts for the promotion of cooperation with Western countries. Now, Myanmar has transformed into a democratic nation, and has become the countries with the most political and media freedoms among ASEAN member states, it may have been seen that the participation of Myanmar in ASEAN has gained the high regard of other countries in the world.

In July 2016, the State Counsellor and Union Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs paid a visit to Laos, Vientiane to attend the 49th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting and other related meetings. In September 2016, she also attended the 28th and 29th ASEAN Summit Meetings and other related meetings.

Among the ASEAN countries, non-interference in the internal affairs of another country is the most important principle position. Although member countries are supposed to solve problems through consultations and negotiations, one ASEAN member country levelled criticisms and abuses against the Myanmar government in relation to the events that occurred in Maungtau, Rakhine state. This is a deviation from the principles of ASEAN, and a situation has developed which can harm ASEAN unity and integrity.

Therefore, Myanmar hosted of AMM Retreat in December 2016 in Yangon. The State Counsellor gave an informal briefing to ASEAN countries in a family spirit about the situation in Rakhine State. Therefore, the ASEAN countries welcomed Myanmar's efforts to solve the problem in Rakhine state; it was possible to officially accept the humanitarian assistance sent by other ASEAN countries including Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia through diplomatic channels. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs successfully negotiated

and made arrangements for the Flotilla from Malaysia with activists on board to dock at the port of Yangon.

In January 2017, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs attended the private informal meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers held on Boracay Island, Philippines and gave an informal briefing on the latest developments on Rakhine State issues.

Efforts made for the national interest at the United Nations

Cooperation with the United Nations is the cornerstone of Myanmar's foreign policy. Given this, the State Counsellor attended the 71st UNGA - United Nations General Assembly meeting in September 2016 and delivered a policy statement representing the Government of Myanmar. In a similar vein, a delegation led by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs attended the meeting of the Partnership Group on Myanmar and briefed them about Myanmar's transition to democracy and efforts to promote human rights and how she was solving the remaining challenges. He also made a request to terminate the practice of submitting a draft resolution by EU - the European Union on Myanmar annually. As a result the EU decided not to submit the draft resolution on the situation of the human rights in Myanmar to the Third Committee of the Therefore the role of Mr. Vijay Nambiar, the Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Myanmar was terminated.

As Myanmar had been working towards the signature and ratification of the International Conventions on human rights and disarmament. With regard to disarmament, the Instrument of Ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was deposited to the United Nations Treaty Section, in New York by the State Counsellor. It is learnt that Myanmar has ratified the CNS - Convention on Nuclear Safety and the CPPNM - Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Myanmar is preparing to ratify the human rights conventions such as ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the "Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. Moreover, the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and other international agreements on human rights are being studied, and workshops have been conducted to educate and create awareness.

Former UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon was invited to attend the First Meeting of the 21st Century Panglong Conference. During his stay, arrangements were made for the former UN Secretary-General to



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Thailand Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha at the government house in Bangkok, Thailand, on 24 June 2016.

meet with leaders of various.

Rakhine State Issues - challenges and efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

National reconciliation and peace being main priority of the Union Government, therefore after taking over state responsibilities, the Government formed the Central Committee for Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development of Rakhine State with the State Counsellor as Chairperson to seek short-term and long-term solutions for Rakhine State on 30 May 2016. Also, to assess the challenges in Rakhine State from an international perspective and to seek sustainable solutions, an Advisory Commission on Rakhine State was formed, and this Commission began work on the key tasks step by step, including verification of citizenship, to address the challenges in the Rakhine State.

While the Government was focusing its attention on the issues in the Rakhine State, starting from 9 October 2016 when terrorists launched armed attacks on border guard outposts, news media began to spread instigations regarding the area clearance operations conducted for security reasons. Thus Myanmar had to suffer increased pressure again. It has been observed that they have started to use United Nation Human Right Council and United Nation Security Council to exert more pressure on Myanmar.

Although Myanmar has received support and encouragement from the international community, on the international arena, it is now facing dangers which could ultimately pose a threat to national interests and sovereignty and pressures and challenges including the Rakhine state affairs.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been making concerted efforts to defend, respond and solve the problems. It is also approaching to win support for our cause.

In January 2017, the State

Counsellor sent the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs as her Special Envoy to Bangladesh to discuss border security of the two countries and ways to increase cooperation between the two countries. In this matter, Myanmar Ambassadors in key countries also approached their host governments to win their support.

In addition to this, a high-level delegation led by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs was dispatched to attend the 34th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council where he delivered a speech and carried out individual approaches to win support.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs stated, "As far as our Ministry is concerned, if there are any accusations upon us regarding human rights, including issues related to Rakhine State, we will make investigations and if proven to be correct, we will take necessary action against the perpetrators. However, if the intention is not to solve the problem but to intervene and complicate the efforts of the government and exert pressure on us, we will work in coordination with friendly countries and exert staunch and strenuous efforts to maintain our ground using diplomatic channels in the international arena."

Increased Cooperation in the Region

Myanmar, a member country of ASEAN, is making preparations to join the India Ocean Rim Association, attending its meeting for the first time as an observer. In cooperation with Australia which is a partner country of ASEAN, Myanmar hosted the ASEAN-Australia Forum in March 2017.

And, Myanmar took the responsibility as the coordinator in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). It is learnt that Myanmar will be hosting the meeting of Foreign Ministers of ASEM, consisting of 53 countries, in forthcoming November.

SEE PAGE 10 >>

Japan ruling party urges govt to acquire capability to hit enemy bases

TOKYO — Japan's ruling party on Thursday urged Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government to consider acquiring the capability to hit enemy bases and to beef up missile defence, as North Korea defies UN sanctions with its nuclear and missile development.

"North Korea's provocations have reached a level where our country can by no means overlook them ... We cannot afford to lose any time to bolster our ballistic missile defence," said a Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) proposal submitted to Abe.

Japan has so far avoided taking the controversial and costly step of acquiring bombers or weapons such as cruise missiles with enough range to strike other countries, relying instead on its US ally to take the fight to its enemies.

But the growing threat posed by Pyongyang, including a simultaneous launch of four rockets earlier this month, is adding weight to an argument that aiming for the archer rather than his



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (R) speaks to Hiroshi Imazu (C), Chairman of Research Commission on Security of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and former Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera (L), head of LDP panel on security policy, after a proposal on missile defence was submitted to Abe at the prime minister's office in Tokyo, Japan, on 30 March 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

arrows is a more effective defence.

"Our assessment is that threat from North Korea has advanced to a new stage, and this assessment is shared by the United States," Abe said at a ceremony where the proposal was submitted. "We intend to grasp today's

proposal firmly." The LDP proposal demanded that the government promptly start necessary consideration for the acquisition of capability to hit enemy bases, such as cruise missiles, to improve deterrent effects of the US-Japan alliance.

"The first (missile) at-

tack can be met with our missile defence. But as for repetitive attacks, it is important to put under control the opponent's launch sites and prevent second and further firing," Itsunori Onodera, an LDP lawmaker and former defence minister, told the ceremony.—Reuters

Singapore to help SMEs thrive in digital economy

SINGAPORE — Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) need to develop strong digital capabilities and raise employees' skills in order to stay competitive, a Singaporean official said on Thursday.

At the Human Capital (Singapore) Thought Leadership Masterclass Series, Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Trade and Industry & Ministry of Education Low Yen Ling said SMEs, which make up 99 per cent of the enterprises in Singapore and contribute to nearly half of the GDP, while employing 70 per cent of the workforce, play a pivotal role in Singapore's development.

Low remarked that SMEs need to continually innovate and scale up to be able to adapt to global disruption. "Our people have to be on a learning track constantly so as to develop new, deep and relevant

skills," she added.

Singapore's government is making concerted effort to encourage SMEs to take their first steps towards digitalization.

Under the SMEs Go Digital program, the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) will work closely with SPRING Singapore's SME Centers to help SMEs build stronger digital capabilities.

Data analytics is another area of great potential for SMEs. Low said SMEs can discover new opportunities and also make informed decisions through mining available information.

She also stressed the importance of human capital development and life-long learning for SMEs to achieve limitless potential and seize opportunities of the digital economy. —Xinhua

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV TRANG AN 07 VOY. NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TRANG AN 07 VOY. NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31.3.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AIPT 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 BAY LINE SHIPPING PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV SINAR BATAM VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BATAM VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31.3.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

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MV X PRESS YAMUNA VOY. NO (009)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV X PRESS YAMUNA VOY. NO (009) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31.3.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S X-PRESS FEEDERS PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV EVER APEX VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER APEX VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31.3.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

MV PINYA STAR VOY. NO ()

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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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Opinion

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

Bright rays of peace shining on Myanmar

Aye Min Soe

PEACE is the main requirement of a country that has faced severe internal conflicts for over 60 years.

As publicly declared, the incumbent government has given priority to the peace process. Normally, the peace process needs time, as it is a task that must be implemented through lots of patience, tolerance, goodwill and mutual understanding while experiencing many ups and downs all along the way.

Many years of experience that the country has endured while seeking peace

has taught us that we cannot deviate from the peace process.

Plans are under way to hold the second Union Peace Conference — 21st Century Panglong in the near future. The Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee has already passed a decision to reach an agreement on the basic principles of federalism at the conference.

The United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), a coalition that represents five armed ethnic groups — Karen National Progressive Party (KNPP), New Mon

State Party (NMSP), Arakan National Party (ANC), Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) and Wa National Organization (WNO) sent message to the government yesterday that they would sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

The news comes as the greatest and most auspicious gift to the country, as it coincides with the incumbent government's one-year anniversary in office.

The five organisations showed their trust in the peace-making process by signing the NCA.

Their courage has creat-

ed rays of hopes for national reconciliation and peace, and has shined a positive light onto the many successive eras of Myanmar history which dreamed of peace.

These bright rays of peace will continue to shine in our country as more progress is made.

We, the Global New Light of Myanmar, firmly believe that the eternal peace that all indigenous people have aspired to for decades will finally become a reality if the government and leaders of the armed organisations work together with the people.

Homegrown Clean Energy an Alternative to Myanmar's Spotty Power Grid

Erin Rubin

NECESSITY is the mother of invention, and in the case of rural Myanmar's electricity generation, it's also the mother of improvement.

In rural areas where the national power grid does not reach, residents are creating electricity out of what's available to them: sun and water. Solar and small-scale hydropower are generating electricity for households or villages, and the country is inadvertently bursting onto the highly modern clean-energy scene.

Myanmar's power grid, which is susceptible to blackouts, leaves thousands of villages without access to electricity. A 2014 World Bank article found that 84 percent of households had no electricity connection. At the same time, rural villagers are connecting to modern technologies and looking to generate a steady supply of power.

According to Myanmar's 2014 census, about 178,000 households used private water mills as a primary source of lighting, while 945,000 used solar and 1 million used diesel generators. Diesel generators are expensive to run, making renewable sources more appealing in poor villages. Less sophisticated sources of light, like candles and lamps, used to be prevalent in poorer households, but they are a fire hazard in huts made of wood or bamboo.

Myanmar (Burma) was economically isolated until just a



Hut under the bridge Amarapura Myanmar [CC BY 2.0], via Wikimedia Commons.

few years ago, and its first democratically elected president took office in 2016. The country does not have laws governing the rural, off-grid power production or a system of support for the burgeoning DIY power industry. In partnership with the World Bank, Myanmar's National Electrification Plan (NEP) aims to bring power to all citizens by 2030, but the government overwhelmingly favors expanding the coal-powered grid.

There are tradeoffs to decentralized power sources, of course;

solar grids don't work that well on rainy days and storing generated power for future use remains a stubborn problem. But here is an opportunity to jump into the energy future without having to overhaul a system from the past.

Leaders of developing countries often opine, as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi did in 2015, that wealthy countries who "powered their way to prosperity on fossil fuel" have a greater obligation to lead on clean energy, while countries with nascent industries should be given more

leeway; transitioning a national energy system is expensive and complicated.

But Myanmar's coal-powered energy system is not entrenched enough in much of the countryside to need overhauling. If investments went to renewable energy that's already a familiar and available source, rather than to developing the fossil fuel grid, Myanmar might be able to modernize its energy grid with minimal cost. The average Myanmar citizen burns 0.238 tons of CO2 emissions per year. In compari-

son, the average U.S. citizen burns 16.39 tons per year—and that's practically a ten-year low, down from 19.24 in 2007.

The World Bank is providing \$400 million to the \$5.8 billion National Electrification Plan, and confirmed that the money is not funding coal or hydropower projects. The NEP plans to subsidize solar systems and mini-grids, but the project will take years to complete, and the subsidies are planned for only half a million households. (There are nearly 57 million people in Myanmar.)

That leaves millions of people currently looking for an energy solution, and necessity has driven them to innovate in ways that are good for the planet. As the country rapidly modernizes, renewable energy sources looking for a market or NGOs wanting to help empower communities through technology might want to look in this corner of the world.—Erin Rubin

(Erin Rubin is the Editorial Coordinator & Community Builder at the Nonprofit Quarterly. Previously, she worked as an administrator at Harvard Business School and as an editorial project manager at Pearson Education, where she helped develop a digital resource library for remedial learners. Erin has also worked with David R. Godine, Publishers, and the Association of Literary Scholars, Critics, & Writers. As a member of the TEDxBeaconStreet organizing team, she works to communicate innovative ideas and translate them into action)

One tank of water sells between Ks20,000 and Ks40,000 in Haka

DUE to the water shortage in Haka, one tank of water is selling for between Ks20,000 and Ks40,000, depending on the location.

This current price prevailed between January and the end of March. Shwepyitha, Myothit, Hakathit wards are faced with a water shortage problem.

"This season, the water is scarce. The price of water is very expensive this year, compared to the same period last year, said a local resident from Shwepyithar ward.

Although Thimiyit dam was

built in Haka to supply the water, the dam is dwindling in quality and now, it is under renovation.

"I am selling the water with the three-wheeled vehicle for two rounds per day. Our family could earn around Ks60,000 per day. I have to send the water mostly to Hakathit, said a local water seller.

Normally water is available only from the mountain stream in old Haka town. The water sellers are carrying the water from Old Haka town and Thi river and sell them back.—Myitmakha News Agency



The aerial view of Haka City, Chin State. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Volume of waste water declined during 18-month period

THE volume of waste water declined from 54 per cent to 14 per cent during the past 18 months of projects implemented in South Okkalapa and Insein townships, Yangon region by Manila Water Mitsubishi Consortium, according to the consortium.

The MMC, a joint effort between Manila Water and the Japanese giant Mitsubishi Corporation, recently completed its 18-month initial phase to overhaul the water distribution system within Yangon..

The volume of wasted water

was redistributed to about 4,000 houses.

As a result of the MMC projects, old water meter boxes have been replaced to greater benefit the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC).

The volume of wasted water in Insein township was 17.32 per cent in August, down from 52 per cent in March, last year whereas the volume of wasted water in South Okkalapa was 12.19 per cent in November, down from 57 per cent in September, last year.—200

Fifty per cent of real estate buyers are homeless or in need

FIFTY per cent of the real estate dealers are buying the real estate to live and the remaining 50 per cent are speculating in 2017 Yangon region, according to the real estate agency.

The local people are buying the apartment to rent because the rental business is flourishing in Yangon region.

"Some are buying the real estate to live. The remaining 50 per cent are buying the real estate to invest. The apartment between Ks 500 lakh and Ks 1,000 lakh are selling well in the market,"

said U Nay Min Thu, a managing director for IMyanmar House.com.

People who want to invest in real estate are buying the house in the business area while people who have planned to live are buying the low and median-priced house in the suburban or outskirts of the town.

"It is a good business for rental businessmen as they can fetch Ks 200,000 per month for renting the apartment costing 30 million kyats. So, some invested in the real estate rather than

investing in other business," said Daw Saw Mu, apartment rental service from Lamadaw township.

There are many squatters in Yangon region because the prices of apartments are skyrocketing. So, the union government has planned to increase the tax on transaction of land and apartment to control the apartment trading.

The tax will increase only for the invested rooms not for the living room.—Myitmakha News Agency

Crime NEWS

Yaba pills seized in Taunggyi



Sai Kyaw Hla is seen together with yaba pills and Toyota Ipsum. PHOTO: MPF

AN anti-narcotics squad from Taunggyi seized 230,000 yaba pills at Doe Nyi Naung passenger gate on Myakantha street in Taunggyi on Wednesday.

Acting on a tip-off, police searched and found a bag holding yaba pills that a man picked up at a delivery service counter at the gate.

Police detained the man

named Sai Kyaw Hla, living at Tangyan Township, together with a Toyota Ipsum vehicle in front of Li Shaw guest house on Tuu Myaung Road in Myoma Ward in Taunggyi.

Police have taken action against Sai Kyaw Hla, 31, under the Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Myanmar Police Force

Pandal and decorated vehicle to evoke old Mandalay Thingyan images

THE Mandalay water festival pandal and Myoma decorated vehicle are inspired by old Mandalay Thingyan images this year, said Dr. Hla Khine, the chairman of Myoma amateur instruments Association.

"Like previous years, our decorated vehicle was leading the pageant of decorated vehicles greeting and passing before the

city Mahar Mandat in the first day of water festival. But this year, we will open the first day of water festival with the entertainment.

Our decorated vehicle will evoke the old Mandalay Thingyan images," he added.

"During the 1930 Mandalay water festival, the pandal and Myoma musical group were

entertaining in turn. It is customary in Mandalay water festival to greet each other before the mobile musical entertaining car leaves the pandal.

This year, the Myoma decorated vehicle will be present at the opening ceremony of the Mandalay City Mahar in the morning and entertain around the city in the evening.—MMAL

Over 10,000 vehicles fined for speeding

OVER 10,000 vehicles were fined for exceeding the speed limit on the Yangon-Mandalay highway during the last six months, according to an official from highway traffic police.

The highway traffic police have been taking action against those exceeding the speed limit since 1st September 2016, after they provided awareness training several times. The highway traffic police from Thargaya, Pan

Tin, Thigon, Pyin Si, Bawnetgyi, Myo Chaung and Baw Ni are measuring the speed with their speedometer.

Most of the fined vehicles are home-use vehicles while some are passenger buses. About 57 vehicles are being fined every day.

"We are taking action against the cars that exceed the speed limit. A total of 10,307 vehicles have been fined as of

March. Up to now, we have already filed cases against 9,878 vehicle owners," said an official from highway traffic police.

The traffic police have set the speed limit at 60 miles per hour on the Yangon-Mandalay highway.

If a driver exceeds the speed limit, he has to pay a fine of Ks50,000 at traffic disciplinary court in Zabuthiri township, Nay Pyi Taw.—200

PERFORMANCES IN ONE-YEAR PERIOD

>> FROM PAGE 6

Finding solutions to border issues

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken the lead responsibility for solving border issues with five neighboring countries that share boundaries with us and boundary demarcation matters. Work has been commenced on the renewal of demarcation matters between Myanmar and Thailand which was suspended during the period of former governments, renewal of demarcation work between Myanmar and India and the matter of the Myanmar-Lao Friendship Bridge all of which have been prioritized.

Thai – Myanmar Border

Thai-Myanmar border line is 1318 miles long, however, only a 36 miles long section of Mae Sai-Mae Hok Creek has been demarcated, and the rest is left still to be surveyed during the time of previous governments due to unfavourable circumstances. State Counsellor, Daw Aung

San Suu Kyi discussed the Thai-Myanmar boundary demarcation survey with the government of Thailand during her official visit to Thailand with the intention of leaving a real legacy for future generation.

The surveying work will start about 200 miles along Pakchan River and its northern watershed area. Now, the aerial survey has been conducting and after getting the aerial photo map of that area, the ground survey will be carried out based on the agreement made during the British colonial era. Then boundary pillars will be erected by the combined team of two countries. Discussions with the Government of Thailand are now underway for signing an agreement.

Regulations specified for Thailand-Myanmar Retaining Walls

There were some disputes between the two countries concerning the border line in the river that change in flow direction of the river and the flood that

occur due to human activities. The two countries have agreed to follow the regulations about the building of retaining walls as a preventive measure of river bank erosion with a view to solving the problems of the in-river boundary.

Myanmar-India Boundary Demarcation

Fencing along the border to prevent the build-ups constructed by local Indians between boundary pillar 145 and 146 in Naga Land started in December 2016. However, the fencing works were stopped as the Indian government requested to carry out the fencing only after the erection of additional boundary pillars by the two sides. The Myanmar side has stopped the fencing operations temporarily and it is learnt that this work will be carried out jointly with the Indian side at the end of March 2017.

Demarcating the boundary on the Myanmar-Laos Friendship Bridge

Although the first Friendship Bridge over the Mekong river, which serves as a boundary between the two countries was completed in 2015, because there had been differences between the two countries with regard to the maintenance and issues of sovereignty, an agreement was reached in Nay Pyi Taw at a meeting held in August 2016 at the Ministerial-level meeting of the two countries, to show and put on record the border demarcation point in the river on the bridge itself.

Therefore, in order to embed the two boundary demarcation brass plates jointly on the Friendship Bridge and to redraw the marine map no. 12 which includes the bridge, a joint inspection of the bridge location was conducted. This was done to show clearly the border demarcation points on the bridge. This act would also help the local authorities to know clearly the extent of Myanmar's sovereignty.

Effort made for Myanmar nationals living abroad

During the term of the current government elected by the people, the Union Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has given clear instructions and guidance for Myanmar Embassies, Missions and Consulates-General to strive to transform themselves into "people-centered diplomats", to work harder, free from bribery and corruption in protecting the interests of Myanmar nationals, to work continuously

for establishment of warm and friendly relations with Myanmar nationals, to provide necessary assistance to Myanmar nationals even if they are serving sentences in foreign countries, because they are Myanmar nationals, to work for former Myanmar nationals living in foreign countries so that they could return to Myanmar and get a chance to participate in working for the country's development.

Myanmar diplomatic missions have changed

Conferences for Myanmar Ambassadors have been successfully held once in Nay Pyi Taw and once in London to give them detailed briefings about the policy of the new Government. The Myanmar Embassies in countries such as Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, have been working hard to find better procedures and methods to protect and assist Myanmar nationals. Although these efforts to assist and help Myanmar nationals is limited by the availability of funds and manpower and could not yet be provided as much as desired, the protection and help provided to Myanmar nationals has improved significantly compared to previous times.

Myanmar Migrant workers in Thailand

Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked together with Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population to assist more than 2 million Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand to get equal rights with Thailand workers under the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two countries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also arranged to issue passports at the Myanmar embassy in Bangkok to Myanmar migrant workers who hold temporary passports and the citizen scrutiny card.

Besides, the Ministry has arranged to issue the Certificate of Identity-CI cards, which identify migrants in Thailand and register their workplaces, to Myanmar migrant workers.

The CI cards have been issued to Myanmar migrant worker in Samusakun, Suparakun, Maisei and Ranoing from 3rd March 2017 onward.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Foreign Affairs has increased the manpower at the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok to effectively carry out the labour issues.

Assisting the returnees in Thailand

Following the goodwill visit of State Counsellor

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to Thailand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs assisted the voluntary return of 169 Myanmar citizens who fled Myanmar for many years, and refuge in Thai side due to internal conflicts.

Support for Myanmar domestic workers in Singapore

Myanmar embassy in Singapore is working together with Singapore authorities and the Labour Union to give legal protection to Myanmar migrant workers including domestic workers against abuses and violation of labour rights.

Myanmar nationals at overseas detention camps brought back home

Since it took office one year ago, the government has made efforts to help Myanmar nationals who are staying in the detention camps in foreign countries as they cannot afford for costs to travel back to the country. More than 200 Myanmar fishermen who served prison term at the Port Blair of India were brought back by charter flight in the first one-year period of the incumbent government.

Similarly, 105 Myanmar fishermen who were trafficked to Indonesia and who were detained in Indonesia were brought back home.

Besides, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs assisted to bring back 1,768 Myanmar nationals and seven babies detained at 11 camps in Malaysia.

Under the 100-day plan of the government, a total of 619 people were removed from the previous government's blacklist. There were 248 Myanmar nationals and 371 foreigners who were erased from the blacklist, and that scrutinising is underway to remove further people.

As part of efforts for encouraging Myanmar nationals in foreign countries to participate in nation building process, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the relevant Ministries has relaxed the social visa rules, which increase duration of stay from 28 to 70 days for single entry social visa and the days for multiple social entry visa are allowed three months, six months and one year.

Unnecessary procedures for foreign diplomats to be abolished

During the term of the incumbent government, services and procedures for foreign diplomats have been scrutinized with impractical ones revoked. Pre-

viously, diplomats and their family members holding diplomatic passports were authorized for three years of stay with renewal but now they have been given stay for the duration of their assignment. Similarly, special passport holders who used to be granted one year of stay are now permitted for stay for the duration of their assignment. Ordinary passport holders can now purchase one-time entry visas for a three-month stay.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs also stated that procedures for travelling inside the country for foreign diplomats and embassy staffs had been mitigated except for certain restricted areas due to security concerns.

Moreover, and Lease Policy for the relocation of Diplomatic Mission to Nay Pyi Taw had been ratified for a smooth transition of embassies after the capital of Myanmar had been relocated to Nay Pyi Taw.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during the one-year term of the incumbent government, has successfully conducted diplomatic visits abroad as well as welcoming delegations to the country, attending as well as hosting international forums and conferences which have all helped to boost international relations with both neighbouring countries and around the world.

"We have to address the challenges and pressure from the international community concerning the situation in Rakhine. However, we were able to stop a draft resolution on Myanmar's human rights situation at the General Assembly of the United Nations and were able to terminate the good offices role of the Secretary-General which was mandated by that resolution. There has been significant and visible progress such as the lifting of sanctions imposed upon Myanmar by the United States. I believe we were able to maintain good relations not only with geopolitically powerful nations but also with all countries in the world. That is not all, we also received encouragement and support from the international community for our transition to democracy and I believe the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been able to coordinate with individual countries as well as with international organizations to obtain increased amounts of financial aid and technical support offered by them, for the peace process and the development of the country" said the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Acting Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Expatriate Consultant Editor

Mark Angeles
markrangeles@gmail .com

Senior Translators

Khin Maung Oo
editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Copy Writer Min Zaw

International News Editor

Ye Htut Tin
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Local News Editors

Tun Tun Naing (Editor)
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor)

Translators

Khaing Thanda Lwin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Hay Mar Tin Win,
translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Ei Myat Mon

Chief Reporter

Tun Aung Kyaw,
reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Computer Team

Tun Zaw (Chief of Computer Team), Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin

Circulation

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

Advertising inquiry

01 8604530, Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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PERFORMANCES IN ONE-YEAR PERIOD



Opening of Smart Garment in Sittway create job opportunities for local people. PHOTO: MNA



The 450-ft long Tunyawai Bridge on the Punnagyun-Yathedaung Road. PHOTO: MNA

One-year journey of Rakhine State Government

Article: Kyaw Thu Htet



The official of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation hands over loan to villages in Buthidaung Township. PHOTO: MNA

The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is under implementation at Sittwayport by MPA as a regional development undertaking. Sittwe and Paletwa jetties are also built.

A draft for Rakhine State Development Plans has been jointly made by UN agencies, international organizations, local and foreign experts including Rakhine State government.

Located in the western part of Myanmar, Rakhine State is a coastal state and with the area of 14200.08 square miles, it is adjacent to Magway Region in the east, Ayeyawady Region to the south, Chin State to the north and Bangladesh to the west.

Rakhine State is home to seven Rakhine ethnic groups

and other nationalities are also residing there.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu said that under the leadership of the State-level leaders, development undertakings have been carried out with greater momentum for Rakhine State. To bring about stability and prosperity in the state, the Central Committee for Stability and Development of Rakhine led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was formed and under it there are numerous levels of work committees, said U Nyi Pu.

Advisory Commission on Rakhine State comprising experts and representatives of both sides led by former UN Secretary General Mr Kofi Annan was formed. The commission made three tours of Rakhine State and it issued statements which should be known by the people.

A Coordination Team for Security, Law Enforcement, and Regional Development in Maungdaw District was also formed with the chief minister at the helm. The team is responsible for all matters relating to se-

curity in Maungdaw District.

Another coordination team is formed to ensure stability and development and to contribute to the works of the central committee.

Coastal export

Myanma Port Authority in Rakhine State handled 44616 metric tons of coastal export during the one-year period of the new government.

Regarding border trade, 9053 metric tons of export were handled and coastal import touched 366989 metric tons.

The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is under implementation at Sittwayport by MPA as a regional development undertaking. Sittwe and Paletwa jetties are also built.

Over 3650 million kyat from the President's Special Fund have been spent on many road projects for regional development.

Law enforcement

Government pays special attention to stability and law enforcement in Maungdaw area.

SEE PAGE 12 >>



Pilot plantation of paddy in rain-fed field in Sittway. PHOTO: MNA



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspects vegetables exhibited at the Fruits and Vegetables Exhibition. PHOTO: MNA

PERFORMANCES IN ONE-YEAR PERIOD



Retaining wall along the Minbu-An-Sittway Road. PHOTO: MNA



Local women learn weaving at the vocational training. PHOTO: MNA



Yarmaung Suspension Bridge on the Yangon-Sittway Road. PHOTO: MNA



Officials from the Veterinary Department inspect chicken farm. PHOTO: MNA



The State government has spared no effort to take measures against bank erosion and to build retaining walls. PHOTO: MNA

>> FROM PAGE 11

After the violent attack on 9 October 2016, Myanmar Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police Force jointly carried out stability and law enforcement tasks while the Union government and the State government are focusing on regional development undertakings.

Non-discrimination

To ensure convenient journey for locals, all the people are treated equally except surprise checks for security reasons.

Five areas namely Kye-ichaung area, Ngakhuya area, Chamaungseik area, Tamantha area and Taungpyoletwei area have been designated for plying two market buses for each area which are difficult to access.

Upgrading schools

In the education sector, high, middle and primary schools were expanded. During one-year period, 29 primary schools were opened and 295 were upgraded. Spending over 5700 million kyat from Union capital fund, 140 schools were built in 2016-2017 Fiscal Year.

Health care

More health care facilities emerged in the last Fiscal Year in Rakhine State. Moreover, staff housings were built for health staff. One of the important steps taken by Rakhine State Health Department was appointing physicians and nurses and other health assistances.

In 2017, health staff will have to take vaccine as a precautionary measure if they need to go to infectious disease affected areas.

Power supply

Millions of kyats were spent on installation of transformers and erecting power lines in Gwa Township, Kyaukpyu Township and Ann Township.

The National Grid supplies power to 13 townships in Rakhine State and measures are being taken to supply power to reach villages.

So far, 147 villages are enjoy-

ing electricity and installation of power lines for 65 villages is in progress.

Disaster prevention

Six cyclone shelters were built at a cost of 600 million kyat for villages in Myebon and Taungup Townships. Two villages in Manaung Township also got the facilities worth 259.16 million kyat.

Land lease agreements

Altogether 585 land lease were granted for industrial works by State and District Administration Department. Farmers in rural areas are also enjoying land lease schemes.

Although Rakhine State is difficult to access in the past, thanks to the efforts made by Ministry of Construction new roads and bridges have been mushrooming one after another.

Communication

Ninety six more towers for mobile phones have been erected in Rakhine State. Local people in Rakhine state also received nearly 60000 SIM cards. It can be deduced from the fact that communication system covers almost all the areas in Rakhine State.

Lots of rain

Due to heavy rains, there occurs bank erosion and silting every year. Therefore, the State government has spared no effort to take measures against bank erosion and to build retaining walls.

Paddy yield

The area of cultivating summer paddy in 2016-2017 stood at 1103762 acres which yielded 65.27 baskets per acre and thus the whole areas produced over 72 million baskets.

Up to February this year 7255 acres of summer paddy have been cultivated against the target of 30200 acres. Agriculture Science was opened in Kyauktaw on 3 March 2016 and 250 students are pursuing agricultural education in that school. At the school workshop on vocational development and creating job opportunities was held attended by agriculturalists and livestock breeding and fishery entrepreneurs.

Smooth transportation, better water supply, rural housing, creating job opportunities

Although Rakhine State is difficult to access in the past, thanks to the efforts made by Ministry of Construction new roads and bridges have been mushrooming one after another. Nearly 14000 million kyat was earmarked to build 198 bridges big and small in 2016-2017 Fiscal Year. Urban and rural water supply systems are introduced spending a total of nearly 500 million kyat for 39 projects in urban areas and 10 projects in rural areas. Rural housing projects were implemented spending 350 million kyat in Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Taungup. Myasein-yang village project is aiming at creating job opportunities. Under the project 30 million kyat for each village was designated and altogether 122 villages has enjoyed the benefits so far.

People-centered projects

People-centered project is implemented with cooperation of World Bank in Ann Township, said Chief Minister U Nyi Pu. He also revealed that the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT Fund) is also contributing to implementation of rural development projects in Gwa and Manaung Townships. He expressed his commitment to development of the whole Rakhine State.

Tens of thousands told to evacuate after cyclone brings flood fears to Australia’s east

SYDNEY — Australian authorities told 40,000 people to evacuate to higher ground on Thursday as a storm system generated by a powerful cyclone that pummeled the northeast two days ago swept down the coast with heavy rain.

Cyclone Debbie hit as a category four storm in the north of tropical Queensland state on Tuesday, smashing tourist resorts, bringing down power lines, flattening canefields and shutting down coal mines.

Driving rain fell most heavily on Thursday in hinterland and coastal areas either side of the state capital, Brisbane.

“This severe weather system that began with Cyclone Debbie and is tracking down the coast is causing havoc across our state,” Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk told reporters in Brisbane.

The cyclone was downgraded to a tropical low depression on Wednesday but on Thursday was driving squalls with torrential rain across a 1,200-km (745-mile) stretch of Australia’s east coast, swelling rivers, causing flash floods and prompting authorities to tell 40,000 people to evacuate.

In Lismore in the north of neighbouring New South Wales state, the State Emergency Service ordered 7,000 residents in low-lying areas to leave after forecasts predicted the town’s worst flood in nearly 20 years.

A levee protects the



Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull looks at damaged and flooded areas from aboard an Australian Army helicopter after Cyclone Debbie passed through the area near the town of Bowen, located south of the northern Queensland town of Townsville in Australia, on 30 March 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

rural hub in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, home to at least 25,000 people, but most of

those downtown planned to seek higher ground, Geoff Baxter, a barman at the Richmond Hotel told Reuters. “We’re clearing out the pub, mate, and closing it up. All the shops got closed, everyone’s clearing up their cellars,” he said.

Further north, Queensland closed more than 2,000 schools as sustained heavy rainfall brought flash floods to the Gold Coast tourist area and Mackay further north.

In the cyclone-hit zone further north still, military helicopters, ferries and planes brought hundreds of holidaymakers stranded on resort islands in the storm’s path to the mainland, where tens of thousands more people were without power.

Resorts along the world-famous Great Barrier Reef and the Whitsunday coast bore the brunt of the storm with wind gusts stronger than 260 kph (160 mph). “It’s kind of chaos down here,” Jon Clements, an architect awaiting evacuation from Hamilton Island, told Reuters. “I think there’s probably three times the number of people they can put on aeroplanes at the moment down there.”

At nearby Daydream Island, where water supplies had run low since the storm, troops brought food, fuel and water while helicopters carried sick guests to the mainland.

The resort will be closed for at least a month for repairs, management said in a statement, as tourism operators statewide reported canceled bookings and anticipated a long-term hit to trade.—Reuters

EU official urges independent controls over Brazil meat industry

BRASILIA — Brazil needs independent controls over its meat industry, a top EU health official said on Wednesday, as he wrapped up a visit to the country rocked by an anti-corruption investigation centring on bribery of its food-sanitation inspectors.

Brazil’s police say in court documents bribes were paid to cover up serious health violations by some meat companies, including the sale of rotten and salmonella-contaminated products. Their probe, dubbed “Operation Weak Flesh,” led some of Brazil’s biggest export markets to ban its meats.

The European Union is among the markets that

suspended imports from 21 meat packing plants that are under investigation in Brazil, which is the world’s largest beef and poultry exporter. EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis said in an interview that its restrictions and stepped-up checks on Brazilian meat imports may not be removed anytime soon. “The situation of meat imports from Brazil will remain under these reinforced checks until Brazil answers our questions and after our forthcoming audit team visits Brazil,” Andriukaitis told Reuters.

“The situation will be much clearer in a few weeks or months. The main message to Brazil is that this issue is not closed. It is about health and quality,” he said.

While he said it was not up to the EU to say what inspection system a country should have, Andriukaitis urged Brazil’s government to introduce more transparent rules that avoid public-private conflicts of interest. “The official control system must be independent and not under the influence of politicians and other actors. We must guarantee independence of the Brazilian official control system,” he said. Brazil’s federal food inspectors currently report to the agriculture ministry and the system has come under fire for having politically appointed supervisors.—Reuters

“Land to lease in Thilawa commercial area”

Land for rent in commercial area: 15 acres of commercial land in Thilawa port zone area, Yangon Region for lease long-term. A good place to do warehouses and industrial business. Available to rent the whole area or part.

For further details please contact;

Centre for Strategic Planning & Development (CSPD)

Phone 09766987512, 09766987513

Fax 01 2301824

Email cspd.myanmar@gmail.com

Souer Co., Ltd (Myanmar Branch)

Notice of Completion of Closing Down

This is to inform the general public that Myanmar Branch of Souer Co., Ltd have been completed with effect from 31st March, 2017.

Daw Soe Soe Htay, Liquidator

B.Com, C.P.A, D.B.L

Room (2B/2C), Rose Condominium,

No. 182/194, 1st Floor, Botahtaung Pagoda Road,

Pazundaung Township, Yangon Region,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

At least 13 killed after Texas church bus crash

SAN ANTONIO — At least 13 people were killed and two others injured when a Texas church bus carrying senior citizens collided head-on with another vehicle on Wednesday, the church and a Texas state trooper said.

The church bus had 14 people aboard when it collided with a pickup truck, with one person in that vehicle, about 80 miles (130 km) west of San Antonio. The cause of the crash was under investigation, said Sergeant Conrad Hein, a Texas Department of Public Safety spokesman.

The truck driver was airlifted to a San Antonio hospital, San Antonio Express-News reported on its

website. The survivor who was on the bus was in serious but stable condition, the First Baptist New Braunfels said on Facebook.

A group of senior adults affiliated with the church were on the bus returning from a three-day retreat in Leakey, Texas, the church said on its Facebook page. “Thank you for the outpouring of love and support. Please continue to pray,” the church said.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott and his wife extended their condolences to the victims.

“We are saddened by the loss of life and our hearts go out to all those affected,” he said in a statement.—Reuters

Invitation for Prequalification (PQ) and Bids

Date: 31st March 2017

Loan Agreement N^o: MY-P4 dated 5th September, 2014

1. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received ODA Loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The Prequalification and Bids are invited by Myanma Railways for Civil, Track, Signalling and Telecommunication Works.

Sr. No.	Invitation for PQ & Bids	Description	Issuing Date	Closing Date and Time	Non-refundable Document Fee
1	IFP No: MR/ PQ/101, PQ/102, PQ/103	CP 101 From Pazundaung to Bago (70.8km) CP 102 From Bago to Nyaunglebin(79.8km) CP 103 From Nyaunglebin to Taungoo(116.0km)	31.3.2017	30.6.2017 (14:00 PM)	100 US\$
2	IFB No: MR/BD/101, BD/102,BD/103	CP 101, CP 102 & CP 103 Package	31.3.2017	30.6.2017 (14:00 PM)	1000 US\$ (per package)

2. The Eligible Nationality of the Applicants shall be Japan in the case of the prime contractor. In case where the prime contractor is a joint venture, such joint venture will be eligible provided that the nationality of the lead partner is Japan, that the-nationality of the other partners is Japan and/or the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and that total share of work of Japanese partners in the joint venture is more than fifty percent (50%) of the contract amount.

3. Interested eligible Applicants may obtain the documents on the submission of a written application to the Tender Office in the head office of Myanma Railway at Nay Pyi Taw Railway Station Compound, Pobba Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, during office hour from 09:30 a.m.to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.(except holidays)

4. Bid must be delivered to the address above mentioned on or before the closing date and time.

5. Technical Bids will be opened on 28th July 2017 at 14:00 at the conference room, Myanma Railways Head Office, Nay Pyi Taw in the presence of representatives from prequalified Bidders.

Managing Director
Myanma Railways, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Nay Pyi Taw Railway Station Compound,
Pobba Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Telephone: +95-67-77024,
Facsimile number: +95-67-77164
Electronic mail address: gmenmnm.rail@mrt.gov.mm, dgmpmnm.rail@mrt.gov.mm (not for submission but for clarification)

One year journey to a democratic nation



(Front row L-R) C-in-C Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, President U Htin Kyaw, Vice President U Myint Swe and former Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham pose with ethnic leaders at the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference in Nay Pyi Taw, August 31, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



President U Htin Kyaw gives the speech. PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY

It has been one year since the National League for Democracy was able to form a civilian government with the slogan "Time for change" and a steadfast support from the people. In accord with democratic customs it is customary to promulgate 100-days and one year reviews of the workings of the elected government.

Only after the publication of the reviews through state owned media can we clearly see the achievements of the current government. Transferring of ruling power is much like taking over the wheel of an old car on a journey. We may need to repair some parts, change some parts or replace some altogether while still keeping a steady pace towards the goal.

There once was a time when Myanmar was quite prestigious among the region but now everyone knows it is lagging behind in respect to other countries. The reason being that fall of political stability led to the decline of the economy as well. That is why the government is prioritizing national reconciliation, ending conflicts, and full realization of human rights so that the economy

can be revitalized and there are equal standards for all.

In the road towards equal development it is important that there is no prejudice in the nation and this was quickly addressed in the first few days of the current government. It is the harsh truth that prejudice has been deeply rooted in the nation for decades. There has been support for eradication of prejudice in the government which I believe shows the government listens and fulfills to the people's needs.

Concerning the situation in Rakhine, accusations and blaming by the international community is directing the economy of the nation with the government making firm and practical responses to the situation which can be likened to a parent caring for their children. The fact that the Tatmadaw and the government collaborated on the various issues in Rakhine as well as in other important matters heralds development of relations between civilians and the military.

In the three pavilions of legislative, executive and judiciary of a democratic nation, legislature has shown concrete results in the country's economy.

It is widely known that Act 5 (f) can be easily applied in arresting politicians; however the Hluttaw has abolished it. Also successfully amended was the law that required reporting of in-house guests that caused inconvenience to visitors in town and villages. In the recent Hluttaw, a Citizen Privacy and Security Law was enacted to ensure citizens receive the rights to complain and sue if their aforementioned rights were violated. These are just a few examples of the effective work from the legislative sector.

The abolishing of some laws that could hinder citizens and the amending of laws that could benefit them as well as working on economic changes albeit confessions of slow economic development after lifting of economic sanctions can be said to be undeniable results.

The people should understand that there are many difficulties and challenges as the government has only been in office for one year, while it has been taking responsibility on fulfilling huge expectations of the people who are thirsty for changes, and conducting nation management.

SEE PAGE 15 >>

“ If the history is any indication, it will be found that the country always enjoyed enormous benefits whenever the countrymen were united. An obvious example was the signing of the Panglong Pact in 1947. The Panglong Pact was a symbol of the unity of all indigenous races, and attainment of Myanmar independence could be attributed to this unity.

(Excerpt from the message sent by President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the New Year on 1 January 2017.)



President U Htin Kyaw greets warmly with the people. PHOTO: MNA



The State Counsellor addresses the audience at the Union Peace Conference in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

“ The Government is trying to implement the national reconsolidation and State peace process by holding the 21st century Panglong Peace Conference. It was obviously found that the armed struggles lasted for long but could not solve the political crisis, only leaving the country undeveloped for decades.

Therefore, it is greatly important for all the national brethren to keep an eye on the 21st century Panglong Peace Conference at which all of us can cooperate and find solutions to the national reconsolidation and union peace.

(Excerpt from the message sent by President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary Independence Day on 4 January 2017.)



Former U.S. President Barack Obama meets with the State Counsellor at the White House in Washington D.C. September 14, 2016. PHOTO: RETUERS



U Henry Van Thio presents cash assistance to a patient receiving treatment at Matupi Hospital. PHOTO: MNA

>> FROM PAGE 14

The government was able to advise cutting down Ks 300 billion from the national budget for the benefit of the people and the nation while simultaneously suspending business and projects that have no potential in contributing to the nation's economy.

The national budget always used to show budget deficit and debt. Only when the national budget is strong can the nation and its economy develop. For this reason, the government has been focusing on collecting tax to get for a stronger financial foundation.

The government formed the new Ministry of Ethnic Affairs as a Union Ministry which has long been required for ethnic unity and development. Education and Health Sector are also important for country which is the basic of the future of the country.

Which is why, the government increased the budget for these two sectors.

13% of state budget will be used and promoting the rural health sector and building of the schools are included.

Such undertakings will raise the country's socio-economic condition that lagged behind other neighbouring countries.

It is remarkable success to be able to hold the 21 century Panglong Conference that can

lead to the securing of peace which people have longed for many years. The government has tried the Union Peace Conference to be all inclusive.

The peace process implemented by the incumbent government is distinct and quite

And people should not harbor the attitude that signifies the fact that the government is the sole institution to be accountable for all national duties. It is not a spirit of democracy.

different from that done by the previous governments. Whereas Peace and tranquility is being planted in the country the housing projects are also carried out for the people of every walks of life.

In founding the better future of the country it needs helps from the people. Only the government and Hluttaws alone

cannot achieve everything without the relentless participation of the people. Private businessmen are also welcome to take part in the nation building process.

And people should not harbor the attitude that signifies the fact that the government is the sole institution to be accountable for all national duties. It is not a spirit of democracy. People's strength is vital in building a prosperous country.

A significant political change occurs in Myanmar after experiencing the plight for 50 years.

It turns one year that the NLD party had won the 2015 multi-party general election with landslide victory and formed the government and carried out national duties. Many has been accomplished by the incumbent government, but there may be a lot left to go further to attain absolute satisfactory. The transfer of power from the previous government to the incumbent government was a smooth process and the presence of good potential in the country under the civilian government is a good sign for the people.

People should participate in marching to the target together with the incumbent government keeping the union spirit and to overcome the obstacle and difficulties exercising the democratic practices.



Vice President U Henry Van Thio observes a BEHS classroom. PHOTO: MNA



Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw speaks to media. PHOTO: MNA



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than attending Hluttaw meeting. PHOTO: MNA



Vice President U Myint Swe meeting with locals in Maungtwaw, Rakhine State. PHOTO: MNA

Mid-season international friendlies don't make sense to Mourinho

LONDON — Scheduling mid-season international friendlies alongside qualification matches makes no sense, says Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho, after defenders Phil Jones and Chris Smalling picked up injuries on England duty last week.

Smalling started in England's friendly defeat in Germany but then had to pull out of the squad with a leg injury, while Jones suffered a toe injury in training.

With both players missing England's 2-0 World Cup qualifier victory over Lithuania, Mourinho questioned the need for friendlies during the domestic season.

"I am totally against the friendly matches," he told Sky Sports. "I think friendly matches for the national team only make sense before the final phases.

"But mid-season friendly matches mixed with qualification matches, I don't think that makes sense."

United will be without both defenders for Saturday's Premier League clash against West Bromwich Albion, while midfielder Paul Pogba and captain Wayne Rooney are also on the treatment table.

Leading scorer Zlatan Ibrahimovic and midfielder Ander Herrera will miss the weekend's game as they serve the final game of their suspensions. With 13 United players involved in international games over the past week, Mourinho said his side were at a disadvantage against eighth-placed West Brom. — Reuters

Nadal beats Sock in Miami quarters, Nishikori out



Kei Nishikori of Japan reaches for a backhand against Fabio Fognini of Italy (not pictured) on day nine of the 2017 Miami Open at Crandon Park Tennis Center in Miami, FL, USA, on 29 March 2017. Fognini won 6-4, 6-2. PHOTO: REUTERS

MIAMI — Rafa Nadal moved into the Miami Open semi-finals with a straight sets win over American Jack Sock on Wednesday, while second seed Kei Nishikori was sent packing after going down 6-4, 6-2 to unseeded Italian Fabio Fognini.

Nadal staved off four break points to avoid going down a double-break early in the second set, a pivotal game that set the stage for his 6-2, 6-3 victory on the Crandon Park hardcourt. Nadal's poise and shotmaking came to the fore when

13th seed Sock threatened to take a stranglehold on the second set.

"That was the key of the second set, two-love (down), 15-40," Nadal said in a courtside interview. "With three-zero a player like Jack, you'll probably be think-

ing third set.

"It was a double positive thing. I saved that game and got the break back (in the next game). The match was much closer than the result says."

Nadal could face his long-time nemesis Federer in the final, with the Swiss, who has a Thursday quarter-final against Tomas Berdych, on the other side of the draw. Federer and Nadal have met twice this year, with Federer winning both times, in a memorable five-set final at the Australian Open and in a one-sided straight-sets fourth-round thumping at Indian Wells two weeks ago.

But Nadal is not looking ahead to Federer, because his semi-final opponent Fognini presents a potential banana skin. Nadal has a 7-3 career record but is mindful he lost to the Italian in a five-set thriller on the US Open hardcourt in 2015.

"It's like a dream maybe," said the 29-year-old Fognini after becoming the first unseeded player in 10 years to make the Miami semis. "This is a big, big tournament for me. I'm happy about my performance. I'm just trying to be focussed on my game and do my best." —Reuters

'Hideous' Cristiano Ronaldo statue sparks social media laughs

FUNCHAL, (PORTUGAL) — When the island of Madeira on Wednesday renamed its airport in honour of its hometown hero Cristiano Ronaldo, all eyes were expected to be on the four-time world player of the year who is adored not only for his soccer skills but also his model looks.

But grabbing attention instead was a bronze bust of the player with a toothy grin and bulging eyes that instantly created a laugh

on social media because of its debatable likeness.

"I defy you not to feel better after viewing this picture of Cristiano Ronaldo alongside his portrait bust," wrote one Twitter user, Tom Sutcliffe (@tds153).

"That hideous Ronaldo statue is going to be a meme in 5,4,3..." posted @Agave310. Another Twitter user deemed the statue "the most gloriously awful bust" of Ronaldo. The 32-year-old Real

Madrid player's girlfriend, Georgina Rodriguez, and his mother, Maria, both attended the renaming ceremony of Portugal's Aeroporto da Madeira, now known as Cristiano Ronaldo Airport. The newly revealed statue holds the distinction of being the second bust of the soccer star and occasional model that has been the subject of online ridicule.

Another statue, also in Ronaldo's hometown, was

picked apart for what some saw as glaring obscurities and differences in likeness between the player and his bronzed counter-part.

"For a very handsome man, Ronaldo has had some appalling luck with statue-makers," quipped Twitter user Tom Williams (@tomwfootball), posting images of the two statues side by side. —Reuters

BAYERN KEEPER NEUER OUT FOR TWO MATCHES WITH FOOT INJURY

MUNICH — Bayern Munich goalkeeper Manuel Neuer will miss the club's next two league matches due a training ground injury that required minor surgery, the German champions said on Thursday. Neuer underwent surgery on a foot injury late on Wednesday, ruling him out of their Bundesliga matches against Augsburg on Saturday and Hoffenheim on Tuesday, Bayern said.

The Bavarians, who are chasing a treble of titles this season, are 13 points clear at the top of the Bundesliga with nine games left and are close to a record-extending fifth consecutive league crown.

They also face Real Madrid in the Champions League quarter-finals next month. —Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS



Bayern Munich's Manuel Neuer. PHOTO: REUTERS