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Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye provides cash assistance to a mother in Sittway yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Mothers, children in Sittway receive cash assistance for nutrition

Under a programme to help pregnant women and children under 2 years of age, expecting mothers, toddlers and babies in Sittway and at the Thakkepyin IDP camp received cash assistance yesterday.

The programme is aimed at providing nutrition to children within 1,000 days after birth.

The cash was presented to mothers and their children yesterday by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye and local authorities. More than 8,000 mothers and children are eligible to receive the cash assistance under the programme, which is being carried out in Chin State, Rakhine State and the Naga Self-administered Zone.—MNA

Myanmar Permanent Representative to the United Nations delivers a Statement at Security Council on Government's efforts in Rakhine State

NEW YORK, 13 Feb — The United Nations Security Council held a briefing session regarding the situation in Myanmar at its Chamber in New York on 13 February 2018. At the session, U Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative/Ambassador of

Myanmar delivered a statement at the Council on the Government's efforts on restoration of rule of law, peace and stability, preparation for repatriation of displaced persons from Rakhine State, and implementation of the Rakhine Advisory Commission rec-

ommendations. Some salient points of his statement are as follows:

- Myanmar has been cooperating with the United Nations in its efforts to alleviate the current humanitarian problems and to achieve its objective of sustainable solution

to the issue of Rakhine State.

- Myanmar and Bangladesh have made significant progress in their bilateral efforts for repatriation of displaced persons. Myanmar will draw on the services of the UNHCR as needed and at the appropriate time.

- Myanmar has already provided Bangladesh with information relating to the resettlement plan, provision of livelihood assistance, access to basic services, and safety arrangements for verified returnees.

SEE PAGE-3

'BANK OF THE YEAR IN MYANMAR 2017'

Awarded by Financial Times (The Banker)

Pyithu Hluttaw

Yangon-Mandalay Road to be upgraded to international standard with ADB assistance

THE first 40-mile section of the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway, on which hundreds of traffic accidents occur every year, will be upgraded to international standards with the assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), said Deputy Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lin.

He made the comment at the Pyithu Hluttaw yesterday in his answer to the question of whether the government has a plan to upgrade the road to a modern four-lane road in order to decrease road accidents, to install modern monitoring and safety equipment and to enforce traffic rules along the road.

"The cabinet has allowed us to get a loan from ADB to upgrade the section from 0 mile to 40 miles starting from Yangon, and we will submit our plan to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw soon," said Deputy Minister U Kyaw Lin.

The condition of the road does not meet international standards in three ways – speed, comfort and safety, he said.



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

Though the road was targeted to be constructed meeting the expressway standard, use of the road was allowed before the road met the international standard, said U Kyaw Lin.

In attempts to reduce traffic accidents, road signs, rumble strips, road lines, road lane and

solar lamp posts are installed at 22 places where road accidents mostly happened.

The major cause of traffic accidents is speeding, and it has been discovered that the number of traffic accidents has decreased dramatically as speed limits have been imposed and

pointed out that it is necessary to set up sign boards for road safety along the expressway.

Actions have been taken against more than 22,600 vehicles from 2016 to 2018 for breaking traffic rules.— Kyaw Thu Htet, Mi Mi Phyto/Myanmar News Agency ■

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw bill meeting held in Nay Pyi Taw

A Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting to discuss the plan for April through September 2018, the National Planning Bill and the 2018 Union Budget Bill was held at the second-floor meeting hall of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw building D in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The meeting was attended by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy speaker; Joint Bill Committee and Public Account Joint Committee Chairman U Aye Tha Aung; the joint bill committee and public account joint committee deputy chairmen; secretaries, joint secretaries and committee members; Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission members; and officials from the Ministry of Planning and Finance, Union Attorney General's office and the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw office.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Amyotha Hluttaw

Motion to conserve natural resources as national duty passed

THE MPs of Amyotha Hluttaw debated the depleting environmental resources in Myanmar at the Amyotha Hluttaw yesterday, and urged the union government to provide protection to the country's natural resources.

The debate focused on the preservation of the country's natural resources as a national duty, submitted by MP U Pe Chit of the Yangon region constituency (9) to the Hluttaw. In his discussion, U Khin Myo Win of the Taninthayi Region constituency (12) pointed out that five factories in Myeik, Taninthayi Region, are using some 300 tonnes of fingerlings a day to produce chicken and duck feed, and they were also using some 20,000 tonnes of firewood every year to run the factories.

"Short-term and long-term plans are required to save millions of fingerlings that are being used to produce feed," said U Khin Myo Win. Six MPs also participated in the discussion. Union Minister for Natural Resources



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

and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win explained the measures adopted by the ministry, pledging that the extraction of natural resources would be conducted with accountability and responsibility towards sustainable development.

In response to the motion,

the union minister also acknowledged that the natural resources of the country need to be conserved. To implement the tasks prescribed in the Environmental Conservation Law, the union government formed a national-level body for environmental conservation, headed by

Vice President U Myint Swe, as well as work committees and region/state supervisory committees for environmental conservation that were formed on 2 June 2016, he said. The union minister also called for cooperation from all sectors, including government, non-government

organisations, region/state governments and local people, to ensure environmental conservation is a success, and urged the Hluttaw to put the motion on record. The motion was passed by 92 votes to 82, with four abstentions.—Aye Aye Thant (Myanmar News Agency) ■

Myanmar Permanent Representative to the United Nations delivers a Statement at Security Council on Government's efforts in Rakhine State

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- Myanmar is ready to receive the first group of returnees and will continue to work in close consultation and cooperation with Bangladesh for the voluntary, safe and dignified repatriation of the displaced persons in accordance with the bilateral agreement.

- In recent days, members of the Diplomatic Corps and representatives of the UN Agencies including UNHCR, WFP, FAO and World Bank, have been given access to Maungdaw area to observe preparation for repatriation and the situation on the ground. The Government has also arranged day-trips to Rakhine State for the Diplomatic Corps and UN agencies residing in Myanmar in three groups in February.

- The Minister for Home Affairs of Myanmar will visit Bangladesh on 15 February to discuss with his counterpart on matters relating to cooperation in repatriation as well as to find solution to the problem of people stranded on Zero line of the border.

- The Government has the primary responsibility to protect its own people. As lives in the affected areas return to normalcy, the police forces have largely taken over security responsibility in most part of Maungdaw District. Although no major clashes with the terrorists have been reported in the past six months, there is always a threat of ARSA terrorists who are taking ref-

uge among innocent peoples. They will take every opportunity to undermine law and order and public security. They will not hesitate to use their brutal tactics of intimidation and killing innocent people who want peaceful life and living in harmony with other communities in Rakhine. The recent media reports on the killing of two camp leaders from refugee camps in Bangladesh sent a warning to those who want to return to their villages.

- On humanitarian assistance, the Government and the Union Enterprise have been providing food and household needs to all communities in Rakhine States in addition to building infrastructures and business activities for economic development of the region. The Red Cross Movement and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) are actively participating in the Government-led mechanism to deliver humanitarian assistance in affected areas.

- An Advisory Board headed by Dr. Surakiart Sathirathai, former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand was formed to provide external perspective and advice to the Committee for the Implementation of recommendations on Rakhine State.

- Concerning allegations of human rights violations, the Government

of Myanmar has always made its position clear that it will not condone any action of abuse. If there is concrete evidence, action will be taken against the transgressor in accordance with the law no matter whom or what he is.

- With regard to the Reuters report in December last year on the finding of 10 bodies in a cemetery in Inn Din, Maungdaw, the Tatmadaw has already formed a high level enquiry team and conducted investigation on the incident. It was found out that 10 ARSA members were arrested by the security forces on 1 September 2017 soon after the terrorist attacks on 25 August. The next day, on 2 September they were executed and buried in the village cemetery without handing over to the Police. Therefore, actions are being taken against 16 individuals including army and police officers and some villagers who had acted in violation of standard operating procedures and rules of engagement. This action of the Tatmadaw is a positive step forward in taking responsibility and deserves encouragement.

- Achieving durable peace, harmony and development in Rakhine State is contingent upon the nation-wide peace and the success of democratic transition of Myanmar. The greatest national endeavour for Myanmar today is to forge a lasting peace.

- Without peace and stability and

rule of law, the country will not be able to realize its ultimate goal of building a genuine democratic federal union which will guarantee security, freedom and progress for all the people.

- On 13 of February, 2 ethnic armed groups, namely New Mon State Party (NMSP) and Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in Nay Pyi Taw, bringing the total NCA signatories to 10.

- The current humanitarian crisis is the consequence of terrorist attacks against security posts. It was a clear present threat to the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar. It is not a religious issue as some people are trying to portray. The majority of Muslims living in other parts across Myanmar have been living peacefully and in harmony with other people of different faiths throughout history.

- The challenges facing Rakhine State has no easy quick fix. Ultimately, it is up to the people of Myanmar to determine how to achieve a peaceful and prosperous Rakhine State.

- Myanmar welcomes constructive cooperation from the international community. Myanmar should not become hostage of the one-sided media and activists in policy making process. Important judgment and policy decision should be based on careful examination of the information.—Myanmar News Agency

NRPC discusses Framework, National-Level Political Discussion, TOR and SOP

A WORKSHOP for Framework, National-Level Political Discussion, Terms of Reference (TOR) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) was held at the National Reconciliation and Peace Center (NRPC) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the workshop, the Secretary of the NRPC, Deputy Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Khin Maung Tin delivered the opening speech.

Then, Director-General of the Ministry of the State Counsellor Office U Zaw Htay explained the items to be discussed.

Secretary of Peace Commission U Khin Zaw Oo talked about the structure, political discussion processes, and issues to be discussed during the political discus-

sion. U Hla Maung Shwe from the Peace Commission talked about National-Level Political Discussions concerning TOR, along with the CSO Forum.

Soon after, U Zaw Htay explained the procedures of the National-Level Political Discussion, and the roles of the organisers of political discussions of the SOP and the role of the supervising committee. A question-and-answer session was held next. The meeting was attended by Hluttaw representatives from groups representing the government, members of supervising committee of national-level political discussion, ministers of ethnic affairs, directors of Nay Pyi Taw Council area, states and regions and officials. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Workshop for Framework, National-Level Political Discussion, TOR and SOP held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

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globalnewlightofmyanmarShwe Kyun Myaw Hotel in Inle, Nyaung Shwe township, Shan State. **PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE**

Ministry granted 1,605 hotel licenses in January

MORE than 1,600 hotels and guest houses, renting out over 64,500 rooms, were operational across the country as of the end of January 2018, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has approved licenses for these hotels, after carefully reviewing the hotels' applications, to ensure tourist can travel conveniently throughout Myanmar.

There are some 390 hotels and guest houses with 20,245

rooms in Yangon, 208 hotels with 8,676 rooms in Mandalay, 141 hotels with 4,401 rooms in Taunggyi and Inle and 85 hotels with 2,919 rooms in Bagan and Nyaung U.

The number of hotels and guests houses which were granted licenses by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has increased every month.

Also, the ministry has granted some 2,638 travel and tour agency licenses, including to 2,596 companies owned by local residents. In addition,

the ministry has granted 2,548 transport licenses, 4,380 guide licenses and 3,449 regional tour guide licenses, as of January 2018.

Among the 14 states and regions, tourists primarily visited Mandalay and Yangon regions and Shan State. Some 3.44 million tourists visited Myanmar in 2017, 2.91 million in 2016 and 4.6 million in 2015.

The number of hotels and guests increased from May 2015 to January 2018 by 457 hotels with 19,247 rooms.—Zwe

Some 95 domestic investment enterprises permitted

DOMESTIC investment, including increased investments, reached Ks3.37 trillion (over US\$900 million) as of the first week of February in the current fiscal year (FY) 2017-2018.

This FY, the Myanmar Investment Commission approved 95 local enterprises. Those domestic investments are engaged in electric power, real estate development, transportation and telecommunications, livestock and fisheries, hotel and tourism, industrial estate development, agriculture and other service sectors.

The Real Estate Development sector absorbed most of the domestic investments, as detailed by the Myanmar Citizens Investment Sector.

According to the new Myanmar Investment Law, region and state DICA offices are authorized to approve investment proposals with capital of not more than \$5 million. Land leases are also to be authorized from regional offices. In addition, tax relief for investments will be available, depending on the set investment zone.

—Ko Htet ■

Thailand-Myanmar border trade reaches US\$1.2 billion

THE value of border trade between Thailand and Myanmar between 1st April and 2nd February was more than US\$1.2 billion in the current fiscal year (FY), which is an increase of \$97 million over the same period in the last FY. Thai-Myanmar border trade is carried out through the Tachilek, Myawady,

Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese gates.

Of these seven gates, Myawady gate is the main access point for Thai-Myanmar trade, though trade value was \$6 million less than last FY. Similarly, Hteekhee also shows a slight decline in trade. The remainders show increases in

trade. Exports through the Kawthoung and Myeik checkpoints significantly surpassed imports.

Export values were \$71 million at Tachilek gate, \$751 million at Myawady, \$159 million at Kawthoung, \$211 million at Myeik, \$10 million at Hteekhee, \$5.8 million at Mawtaung and \$0.75 million at Maese.

Thailand exports cosmetics, machinery, food products, agricultural equipment and trucks into Myanmar, while marine products (various fish, dried shrimp and fish, fresh crabs) and agro products (onions, sesame seeds, turmeric, corns, etc) were exported to Thailand.—Ko Khant ■

Five containers of Taro leaf-stems to be exported to S Korea

FIVE containers of dry Taro leaf-stems (petioles) will be exported to South Korea this fiscal year, according to U Aung Ye Myat, a merchant from Pantanaw Township, Ayeyawady Region.

“Currently, we are planning to annually export more dry Taro-leaf-stems to Korea. The price of dry Taro leaf-stems has increased. On the other hand,

South Korea has also offered to buy double the amount of dry Taro leaf-stems. Recently, Korea began buying dry Taro leaf-stems, which are grown in Ayeyawady Region and Shan State, he added.

Dry Taro leaf-stems grow naturally in the Ayeyawady Region. Foreign demand has increased because Taro leaf-

stems are healthy and are not grown using chemical fertilizers.

Taro leaf-stems grow during the rainy season in rural areas. Taro leaf-stems are grown in Nyaungdon, Maubin and Pantanaw Townships.

There are six types of Taro leaf-stems. The price of dry Taro leaf-stems is Ks 2,200 per viss.

In Shan State, the price of dry Taro leaf-stems is Ks 2,500 per viss, depending on the distances in which they are transported to market.

Dry Taro leaf-stems are also exported abroad. Recently, local farmers began buying land to cultivate Taro in order to prevent a scarcity of Taro leaf-stems.—Zar Lin Thu (AMIA) ■

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with your name and title.

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.

All-round cooperation needed to practice OSH system

By May Thet Hnin

More than 100 workers are subject to occupational accidents each year, based upon a survey conducted at factories, workshops and stores, in accordance with the Factories Act 1951. This figure excludes accidents in other workplace locations.

According to a report based upon the Myanmar Labour Force Survey 2015, the country has a labour force of 44.8 million people, more than 51.7 per cent of which is working in the agriculture industry. The industrial sector accounts for 16.8 per cent of all workers, while 31.5 per cent are engaged in the service sector. If those sectors are included in the survey, the rate of occupational accidents and deaths rises higher.

Global estimates of occupational accidents and work related diseases, issued by the International Labour Organization (ILO), claims that a worker dies from a work-related accident or disease every 15 seconds, at a rate of an estimated 2.3 million lives per year. It also claims that some 317 million workers suffer from accidents. This announcement also points out that a lack of occupational safety leads to a nation's 4 per cent loss in GDP. In Myanmar, there were overall 156 cases of work-related accidents from 1st January 2017 to 3rd December 2017, with 49 minor cases, 82 serious accidents and 25 fatal cases, according to a table of work-related accidents.

The Factories Act 1951 was amended in 2016, however, the new law fails to cover occupational safety in every workplace. The Occupational Safety and Health Law (draft) submitted to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in February 2017 is now in the hands of the Bill Committee of Pyithu Hluttaw. After this law is instituted, OSH activities will be obligatory for all employers. U Nyunt Win, director-general of the Factories and General Laws Inspection Department, said that prior to enactment of the OSH bill, educational campaigns regarding occupational safety were conducted at factories and workplaces, in cooperation with ILO.

"The OSH law, which is soon to be developed, is regarded as an umbrella law. The formation of the OSH committee and assignments are embodied in this bill. It highlights the joint agree-



Construction labours work at the site in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAR

There were overall 156 cases of work-related accidents from 1st January 2017 to 3rd December 2017 in Myanmar.

ment between employers and employees. Procedures for formation of safety committees and inspections to identify safety and health hazards and training in the workplace are incorporated into this bill", he noted.

At present, employers and workers usually agree to mutual understandings about compensation following occupational accidents. Cases requiring action under the underlying laws are seldom seen.

Employers are reluctant to execute OSH activities due to weaknesses in the law and regulations, along with the high cost of OSH activities, U Nyunt Win said.

"Employers have little interest in the Occupational Safety and Health process. Most of them are concerned over high costs, and those activities are virtually meaningless to them. We can even count on the fingers of hands number of businesses

which practice OSH system", said Director-general U Nyunt Win.

Weak OSH processes, a lack of leadership, a minimum budget to carry out the OSH process, workers who have little knowledge about OSH, and workplaces in far-flung areas in which labour inspectors cannot easily reach, are contributing factors to the high rate of work-related diseases and accidents, said U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, deputy director of the Factory and General Labour Law Inspection Department.

OSH requirements include having a proper working environment with specific lighting, protective measures to guard against chemical and toxic hazards, electrical safety and workstation ergonomic designs. Additionally, purchasing safe machines, using safe feeding and ejection devices, placing guards around dangerous parts and regular maintenance, are a must to ensure safety around machines.

Occupational safety does not count solely on the leaders and employers. U Naw Aung, deputy chairman of Myanmar Industries Craft and Services Trade Unions Federation (MICF), stressed flaws found in both the government and employees.

Regarding occupational safety and healthy activities, the government's law enforcement is also weak. Employers need to create a happy work environment for workers by providing necessary facilities to assure occupational safety, he noted. Workers also need to avoid careless actions, such as working

without wearing gloves, masks, safety boots, and more. Workers need to recognize the risks of possible work-related accidents and diseases.

"The government's supervision and law enforcement is the most critical thing. All those stakeholders who are links in the chain of events show weaknesses", he continued.

SMEs and garment industries, which form the basis of Cutting, Making and Packaging systems, have a strong labour force which must adopt OSH processes, said U Aye Thaung, chairman of the Shwe Lin Pan Industrial Zone. OSH related certificates are required for CMP based garment factories linked with Europe, the USA and Japan, and so they hire doctors and nurses in the workplace. The government requires creating educational campaigns about OSH, and providing subsidies for carrying out the OSH processes.

"Prevention measures are needed to prevent accidents. If the government cannot provide financial assistance to small enterprises which cannot afford to carry out OSH activities, they should link with organizations for funds", said U Aye Thaung.

Dr Khin Maung Lwin, Managing director of Fame Pharmaceuticals, who has been recognized by ASEAN for carrying out OSH activities in the workplace, points out that quality management systems, environmental management systems and occupational safety and health systems must work in harmony

to have a successful business.

"Those employers that put in place OSH systems gain considerable prestige", he noted.

Carrying out OSH activities is likely to reduce medical leaves, prevent risks of fires, create a proper workplace and build good relation between employers and employees. Therefore, businesses following OSH system can save more money in the long term and promote businesses' reputation, said Dr. Khin Maung Lwin.

In 1972, the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission (Central) adjudicated the working functions at factories, forming sub-committees. After 1988, this committee was dissolved. There are now stacks of occupational accident records at the Social Security Board and the Factory and General Labour Law Inspection Department under the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, as well as related departments under the Ministry of Health and Sports, said Dr Than Htut, retired deputy director (Occupational Health) of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

"The lack of occupational safety causes disabilities and even fatalities. The workplace must have occupational safety measures and related educational events for their workers. It also needs to support training, when it is required", he added.

Occupational safety is compulsory for the workplace, due to changing working conditions, and in line with introduction of new technologies, said OSH trainers.

"OSH is a right of workers, and its use creates prestige for employers. OSH activities might seem like a burden on employers, but they will reap benefits to the state, employers and workers, in the long term. Thus, all-around cooperation is required by the state, employers, employees and social welfare organizations, said U Ohn Myint, patron and advisor of the Wisdom World Company, which provides OSH training.

Poor human resources and financial conditions in Myanmar results in a rising toll of work-related accidents and diseases in SMEs, which remain the driving force of Myanmar's economy. As a consequence of this, accidents can harm productivity rates and it can also affect the country's economic growth, somehow. ■

Union Attorney-General's Office mid-level law officer refresher course concludes

A concluding ceremony for the Union Attorney-General's Office mid-level law officer refresher course 1/2018 was held yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. Union Attorney - General U Tun Tun Oo addressed the ceremony.

The Union Attorney-General said, "Trainees need to study and learn case law. Combining real life experience with the training provided in this course will help law officers provide legal advice and to draft laws."

The Union Attorney-General added, "There are many benefits to gain, such as crime investigation, crime management, intellectual property, labour law, laws to protect women and girls against violence conducted by UNDP, JICA and USAID. Law officers need to be free from corruption, take pride in their



Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo delivers the speech at the closing ceremony. **PHOTO: MNA**

work and be knowledgeable in order to reach their ultimate destination."

"Everyone is urged to live under the motto 'Law practice is a practice full of ethics and dignity'", the Union Attorney-General further said.

The outstanding trainees

were then awarded by the Union Attorney-General.

The event was attended by Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint, Permanent Secretary, directors general, deputy directors general, directors, trainers and 35 trainees. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Brunei Darussalam signs an Agreement for reciprocal exchange of land for the construction of diplomatic premises



A signing ceremony of the agreement between Myanmar and Brunei Darussalam held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Signing ceremony of an Agreement for reciprocal exchange of Land for the construction of diplomatic premises between the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan the Brunei Darussalam was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Agreement was signed by U Myint Thu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Government of the Republic

of the Union of Myanmar and H.E. Mr Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Pahlawan Colonel (R) Dato Paduka Haji Abdu'r Rahmani bin Dato Paduka Haji Basir, Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to Myanmar, on behalf of the Government of Brunei Darussalam.

U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation witnessed the Signing Ceremony, and Directors General of Planning and Administrative Department, Protocol Department and Political Department and officials from

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives from Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee and officials from the Embassy of Brunei Darussalam also attended.

The Agreement aims to support the relocation of the Embassy of Brunei Darussalam to Nay Pyi Taw Diplomatic Zone, the administrative capital and will enhance a closer cooperation and efficient communication between the Government's institutions and the Embassy.—Myanmar News Agency ■

One more political party applies for registration

Registrations of political parties are being scrutinized by the Union Election Commission (UEC). It is learnt that the National United Democratic Party (N.U.D) has approached UEC to register itself as a political party on 14 February 2018.—Myanmar News Agency ■

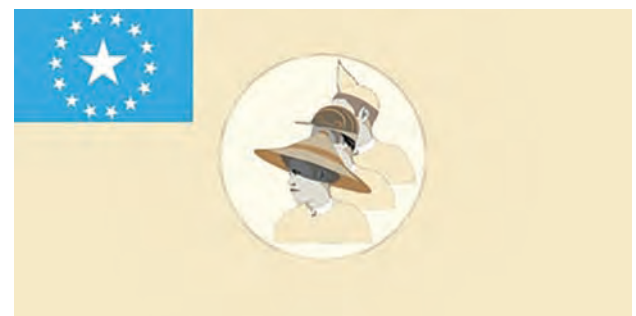
Public Announcement for remonstrance

THE National United Democratic Party (N.U.D) headquartered at No. 2319, at the corner of Chindwin Road and Khatta Road, Shwe Kyar Pin Ward in Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw, has submitted an application for registration as a political party in accord with Section 5 of the Political Parties Registration Law on 14-2-2018. In their application they mentioned that they will use the name, the flag and the emblem as described hereunder.

In accord with Section 14 (d) of the Political Parties Registration Rules, it is hereby announced that those who want to remonstrate with the UEC about the party's name, flag and emblem may submit a complaint along with the supporting evidence within seven days starting from issuance of this announcement.

Union Election Commission

Flag of National United Democratic Party,



Emblem of National United Democratic Party



Myanmar Cultural Variety Show held in Nay Pyi Taw

The Myanmar Cultural Variety Show, to mark the 71st anniversary of the Union Day of Myanmar, was held on 12 February at Shwe Yathu Hall of the University of Veterinary Science, Yezin, Nay Pyi Taw.

The show was organised by the Central Committee of national ethnic literature and

culture from the University of Veterinary Science, Yezin Agricultural University and University of Forestry (Yezin). Students of these universities performed at the show, and the performances included the Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine, Shan and Naga ethnic dances. —GNLM ■

NCA signatories: We are ready to work together to create the Federal Republic

Photo: Htein Nan Naw, Hmway Thant

THE news team interviewed participants at the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) by the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and Lahu Democratic Union (LDU).

Colonel Wunna Aung, Secretary (1) of Joint Monitoring Committee

We will be monitoring if organisations are following the military rules and regulations, as well as the NCA rules. We might send inspection teams for that, but our main goal is to reduce difficulties for everyone.

U Yar Htep, Shan State Minister for Lahu Ethnic Affairs

Our region still lacks good healthcare, education and basic infrastructure, but by cooperating with the union government, we hope to provide better opportunities to the ethnic people. Peace is crucial for the country's development and to achieve that, firstly, all ethnic groups must be united, and secondly, all ethnic groups must have mutual respect. If we can achieve that, then we can develop each region, state and the nation.

U Khin Zaw Oo, Secretary of Peace Commission

On 15 October 2015, the union government and eight ethnic armed organisations (EOs) signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, and now, after numerous meetings, we have two additional signatories to the NCA. In southern Myanmar, there is Kayin State, Mon State and Taninthayi Region, and of the three, only Mon State had not signed the NCA and was not involved in the peace effort and development processes. However, now that the New Mon State Party has signed the NCA, we can assume that all of lower Myanmar is on the right path towards lasting peace. We have not closed our doors to anyone for peace talks. There have been unofficial meetings with EOs, but we cannot officially announce anything yet.

Naing Aung Mangae,



Colonel Wunna Aung.

I want to tell the remaining non-signatories to conduct negotiations and join us together in the peace process.

NMSP's Executive Committee Member

The next step after the NCA, is holding a national political dialogue, and we are committed to it. There are advantages, as well as disadvantages, in holding this. The disadvantage is that not all EOs are on board yet; however, the advantage is that signing the NCA allows us to participate in political dialogues. The NMSP alone cannot bring about change, so we are ready to work together with everyone to create the Federal Republic.

Dr. Tu Jar, Kachin State Democracy Party

Civil war is a political problem that needs a political solution, and everyone knows this. Especially in 2010, during President U Thein Sein's administration, people have come to accept this and have engaged in talks, as opposed to using force. Eventually, this led to the forming of the NCA and holding of discussions based on it. Not all EOs have signed the NCA, because there are some points in it that they want to amend. During the meetings leading up to the NCA, we can at least achieve a temporary ceasefire scenario, which may help us build trust in each other. The delegation for political nego-



U Yar Htep.



Dr. Tu Jar.

tiations (DPN) and the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre held discussions and came up with eight points to be added to the NCA. The NMSP and LDU were satisfied with that, and they have signed the NCA, so I think other EOs can find ways to ask for something that will work for them.

Narvis Bon, LDU Executive Committee Member

We are proud to have signed the NCA, and we hope to join forces with the people to develop Lahu. Signing the NCA will allow us to participate in political dialogues, and at the grassroots level, we will engage in discussions with the public. I am happy to see everyone welcoming us so eagerly. I want to tell the remaining non-signatories to conduct negotiations and join us together in the peace process.

Saw Sein Win, Member of Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC); Democratic Karen Buddhist Army

I think our Kayin people have gained increased travel and job opportunities. I hope the remaining EOs will join us quickly in building our nation.



U Khin Zaw Oo.



Narvis Bon.

U Thein Tun, Member of UPDJC (National Unity Party)

We have 10 signatories to the NCA now, and I urge the remaining EOs to join the NCA as soon as possible. It is the wish of all ethnic groups. If all of us sign the NCA and the civil war ends, then we can engage in a political dialogue, and if we are all united in our mission, then we can establish a federal democratic system.

U Nyo Ohn Myint, Secretary of Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

After eight meetings for the NCA under the current administration, the NMSP said they will sign the NCA if the Tatmadaw offers some sort of agreement; so, I assume the commander-in-chief made an agreement with Chairperson Nai Htaw Mon, and the other NMSP leaders accepted it. This is just my speculation. There may be additional signatories in the future. It takes some two to three months for the EOs and the union government to convene, and misunderstandings can happen during that waiting period. However, today's signing was possible because there was trust.

U Ko Ko Gyi,



Naing Aung Mangae.



Saw Sein Win.

88 generation Peace and Open Society

The signing of the NCA today shows the amount of trust that has been built, and I think there should be more meetings with the non-signatories to build trust in them too. I think there should be continuous interaction with them, even if it is not on official grounds, so that we can become more intimate with each other. The JMC (joint monitoring committee) was established to monitor the NCA, and the UPDJC was formed for political development. They are like the left and right feet. One of the pair monitors the ceasefire based on political activity, and the other conducts political dialogue based on the ceasefire situation.

U Sai Kyaw Nyunt, Secretary of UPDJC

Two additional signatories may not seem to be a big deal, but change is significant regardless of the scale. The NCA is not the end goal. It is an agreement that acts as a synapse for us to conduct political and peace dialogues, so that we can build the federal state that we desire. I invite all the remaining EOs to join the political dialogue, either by signing the NCA or by other possible means.—Naing Lin Kyi, Aye Aye Thant, Mhwe Kyu Zin, Khin Su Su Hlaing ■

Conservation efforts need enforcement and top-to-bottom duties and responsibilities

MYANMAR's natural resources need to be managed more effectively, with better waste disposal and responsible land usage. Our country is experiencing challenges such as over-extraction of natural resources, improper disposal of waste, emissions from factories, pollution of water; land and air while encountering problems induced by climate change. To overcome these challenges, natural resources need to be maintained and managed systematically and effectively. In order for the country's development, environmental conservation needs to be combined and be in harmony with the other sectors.

There will always be challenges and state and regional governments need to do their best to resolve these challenges and the problems of environmental conservation.

Shrinking mangrove areas, palm trees being cut down for palm oil in the south of Taninthayai, and small-scale mining are causing deforestation. Environmental impacts are the biggest problems, and they will impact people's lives. The matter of environmental conservation and climate change needs to be coordinated and conducted up to international norms and standards. It is important for the Union government and states and regional governments to work in coordination. The environmental conservation projects need to be approached with thoughts on the duties and responsibilities of states and regions in a Democratic Federal Republic system. There will always be challenges and state and regional governments need to do their best to resolve these challenges and the problems of environmental conservation. The Global New Light of Myanmar would like to stress the need to speed up enforcement of the rules on sustainability of natural resources nationwide.

Emergence of a new step towards peace in Myanmar

By Shin Min

A NEW step in the direction of perpetual peace and stability has been made in Myanmar. The New Mon State Party (NMSP) and Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) at the Myanmar International Convention Centre -II in Nay Pyi Taw on 13 February, 2018. This is one of the first steps which can lay the foundation for a Democratic Federal Republic which will emerge in the future for national reconciliation and union peace. That auspicious day coincided with the birthday of our Independence architect Bogyoke Aung San, which was grandly celebrated across the country. It was pleasing to see this auspicious day in which ethnic national races signed the Panglong Agreement, which could result in a new chapter in Myanmar's history.

The journey to our national reconciliation and Federalism is not always smooth. The path to peace is a long-distance journey based on resolute spirit and faith. There have been ups and downs, fits and starts and there have been many twists and turns in the peace process. All Myanmar nationals watched this signing ceremony with high hopes and enthusiasm.

Panglong Spirit

At the signing ceremony of the NCA, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said, "This is the decision to make the first step to jointly lay the foundation stone of the Democratic Federal Republic that will emerge in the future for national reconciliation and union peace. The NCA is the beginning of the Peace Process, the beginning of the political dialogues and the beginning of reduction of armed conflicts; it is the beginning of the political process that will result from the resolution of political problems through negotiations, discussions and the joint search for solutions. At the same time, in the NCA there are agreements for formulating policies and frameworks for political dialogues and for initiating various steps of political dialogues for the emergence of political dialogues that will result in the establishment of the Democratic Federal Republic".

A Good Prospect

After regaining independence in 1948, Myanmar suffered the consequences of insurgencies and unrest mainly due to mistrust, hatred and the evil effects of armed conflicts. Successive governments spoke with ethnic armed groups to halt the unrest, which lasted for many decades.



New Mon State Party Chairperson Nai Htaw Mon(c) signs Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in Nay Pyi Taw on 13 February 2018. PHOTO: MNA



Lahu Democratic Union Chairperson Kyar Kun Sar signs Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in Nay Pyi Taw on 13 February 2018. PHOTO: MNA

As a result, the government and ethnic armed groups agreed to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in 2015. At the UPDJC meeting, Peace Commission's secretary U Khin Zaw Oo said, "Peace Commission and Delegation for Political Negotiation (DPN) of United Nationalities Federation Council (UNFC) held a total of 18 meetings -- nine formal meetings and nine informal meetings -- within an 18-month period. Meetings were also held periodically with ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) who have not yet signed the NCA. If I am asked whether other groups can sign the NCA in 2018, I will have to say yes. I can't say which group, but there are many possibilities of more groups signing the NCA. We still have more than 10 months left, and we'll negotiate to reach a consensus. The UPDJC will start in the coming few days. Holding national-level political dialogues will be discussed. We will also

continue to work with groups who are unable to hold national-level political dialogues. Once this part is done, the Union Peace Conference can be held.

An agreement formed

The recently signed version of the NCA, which consists of seven sections and thirty-three articles, has further strengthened the bond between the union government and the ethnic armed organizations. The crux of the NCA is that political differences will not be solved through military force, but with political dialogue, which will emerge as the norm for resolving issues. The EAOs have always been taking care of their respective regions' development, and now the signatories will be cooperating to develop education, healthcare, society, economy, conserving the natural environment, conserving the language and culture of Myanmar's ethnicities, upholding the rule of law in each region and combating drug trafficking throughout the country.

The State Counsellor said yesterday that she heard news of the people from the NCA signatories' regions celebrated with joy upon hearing the news that the NCA was being signed. "This is a prominent change they are showing that they will not be treated as ruthless organisations anymore", she said.

No longer astray

The Ministry of Home Affairs issued an announcement on 11 February that the New Mon State Party and Lahu Democratic Union have been removed from the list of unlawful organisations and that they are not terrorist organisations either. At the signing of the NCA, NMSP Chairperson Nai Htaw Mon promised that he will do his best to build a united federal state with both the signatories and non-signatories of the NCA.

Standing invitation

The State Counsellor has said that there is no one right way of devising a federal system. It depends on the environment, history and needs of the country and its people. She said everyone in the country needs to discuss and plan together for the shared future. She said the country needs to be united in spirit, for only a united people can build a federal country, and to do that we need to build trust and understanding amongst ourselves first. "Which is why I heartily welcome and encourage the remaining ethnic armed groups to come join us in political dialogue and discussions," she said. In conclusion, the NCA is a step forward in achieving lasting peace, and our door is always open for our ethnic brothers and sisters who have yet to sign the NCA.

Translate by
Win Ko Ko Aung and Zaw Htet Oo

Citizen's Budgets – Democracy in Action

As Myanmar moves towards greater decentralization of political power and fiscal responsibilities, how is the current conversation between governments and citizens shaping up?

By Ildrim Valley and Stephanie Guo

MYANMAR is currently in the midst of a historic shift towards more democratic and responsive government, spurred by the creation of elected state and region governments. Local politicians at subnational level must now win elections, conceptualize policies and manage their own budgets to best to respond to their citizens' needs. In theory, such decentralization of political power and fiscal responsibilities, away from the center and closer to the people, is perceived to be a good thing. If a productive dialogue between governments and citizens is central to a functioning democracy, then decentralization brings the two parties closer, facilitating a smoother conversation and allowing the government to hear and respond to voices it would have missed from further away. However, closer proximity alone does not directly result in more fruitful conversations and a more responsive government. Equally important is the quality of these conversations as they ultimately contribute to a stronger social contract between governments and people. The quality of the conversations between government and citizens depends on various elements: fair and open elections, the dissemination of accurate information, mechanisms of accountability, the free exchange of ideas, and strong rule of law, for instance. Many of these elements will take time to strengthen during this critical period of transition in Myanmar's history, begging the immediate and fundamental question - how is the current conversation between governments and citizens shaping up? Initial decentralization efforts created a strong demand from citizens for information about how their government works and their own role in emerging democratic structures. After decades of centralized dictatorial rule, the citizens' enthusiasm to engage and participate in the decisionmaking process that affect their lives carries is hopeful and encouraging. International and local NGOs have attempted to meet these demands by producing public documents on a range of topics including new government structures, the responsibilities of Hluttaws, and public finances. More recently, however, state and region governments have begun responding to these demands and have themselves started reaching out to citizens. This year, six state and region governments (Ayeeyarwady, Bago, Kayin, Mon, Kayah, and Tanintharyi) have followed the central government's lead and published their own Citizen's Budgets, a document presenting key public finance information to a general audience. As the name suggests, it is meant to provide government budget information to citizens. By presenting budget information in a more accessible format, Citizen's Budgets foster a greater understanding of how public money is being used. The release of these documents demonstrates a significant government



effort toward fiscal transparency and stronger democracy for multiple reasons.

First, at the most fundamental level, Citizen's Budgets are a crucial step governments at different levels made towards meaningful interactions with citizens as they share information that would have been arduous for anyone to acquire just a few years ago. These documents not only increase transparency, but also give citizens ownership of information that is geared toward serving their needs.

Second, behind the push for transparency lies the governments' increasing willingness to conduct a conversation with its constituency, an early sign of strengthening channels of communication between the government and its citizens. It encourages civic engagement with the government process, and their participation can lead to more informed budget and policy decisions, and ultimately, better development outcomes.

Third, subnational Citizen's Budgets reflect a rare exercise of local authority. Although releasing Citizen's Budgets mirrors the initial step taken by the Union government, a closer look reveals differences across states and regions in how the subnational governments have approached their constituencies in this regard. These diverse approaches demonstrate increasing state/region government ownership over its responsibilities, and should encourage cross-state and region learning opportunities.

Building a responsive and democratic government necessitates time and effort. A productive conversation between governments and their citizens will require building trust, and must be founded on a capable and engaged citizenry and a transparent government. In this regard, the conversation between governments and citizens in Myanmar has a long road ahead; however, Citizen's Budgets are a strong step in the right direction. ■

Ildrim Valley is an Economist with the Renaissance Institute and Stephanie Guo is Program Officer at The Asia Foundation in Myanmar.



Diesel locomotives will be built by Myanmar Railways this year. PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAH

MR to build ten diesel locomotives this year

MYANMA Railways (MR) will build ten diesel locomotives this year, according to a report in 13 February's Myawady Daily.

The MR will build ten locomotive workshops in Nay Pyi Taw and Myintnge at the end of February. Locomotives will run on 2000-HP diesel engines and operate at speeds of up to 100 km (70 miles) per hour.

According to the upgrade project, launched in 2015, the MR will build 22 locomotives and 60 train coaches.

Currently, the MR is operating the Yangon-Mandalay-Pyay rail service with the use of 12 locomotive and 39 coaches.

"The building of locomotives included in this project will be completed this year. The MR will

continue producing locomotives, if it receives necessary monetary assistance," said U Aung Win, the General Manager of MR.

Nay Pyi Taw locomotive workshop has received equipment for five locomotives, with the remainder still to be delivered. The assembling of the locomotives can begin at the end of February.—GNLM ■

Over 2,500 dengue cases, 27 deaths, recorded in Rakhine State last year

RAKHINE State recorded more than 2,500 confirmed cases of dengue fever in 17 townships last year, said Dr San Kywet Khine, Assistant Director of the state Public Health Department.

According to the Myawady Daily's Tuesday report, the cases of dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) in Rakhine State significantly increased, when compared with the previous year.

As reported in hospital-based data, the number of DHF cases increased in Sittway, Minbya and Taungup townships

in 2017. The disease killed 27 people, mostly in Sittway, Kyauktaw and MraukU townships. The most affected age group was children between 5 and 10 years of age, according to physicians.

Dr San Kywet Khine said the health department continues to carry out preventive measures against dengue fever in every ward and township since the beginning of this year.

In Myanmar, the disease used to be more common in the rainy season, but now DHF transmission occurs throughout

the year, said physicians.

The virus has been particularly prevalent in flood-affected areas that provide ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Lack of sanitation, unhygienic water storage and overcrowding are mainly blamed for causing the deadly infectious disease.

There were more than 42,900 confirmed cases of dengue fever, with 140 deaths, in the country in 2015. However, these figures dropped to 10,770 cases with 58 deaths the following year.—GNLM ■

Middle-aged man hurt in mine blast in Myitkyina Township, Kachin State

A local resident sustained serious injuries in a mine explosion near Nangkwechaungpya in Myitkyina Township in Kachin State on Monday in the early morning.

The 42-year-old man, identified as U Ngwa Lay, a resident of Area-14, Shwesettaw Ward, was searching for his cattle in a field near Nangkwechaungpya

when the explosion occurred, injuring his left arm and leg. He underwent surgery at a 300-bed military hospital.

Four other people were also hurt in mine explosions near Tanai Township, Myitkyina District, Kachin State, on 19 January and 20 January. —Win Naing (Kachinmyay) ■

Two high school students killed in traffic accident

TWO high school students were killed in a collision between a farm tractor and a motorbike in Bago Town on Union Day, which fell on 12 February, according to the police.

The motorbike, which had no number plate, was driven by Maung Maung, an 18-year-old student, traveling with two others onboard. Officials said the bike collided with the tractor, driven by Ko Thu, 22, who resides in Mazin Ward in Bago Town. The accident happened near Power Restaurant at the

edge of Socialist Street-23 in Shinsawpu Ward in Bago at around noon.

The motorcyclist, Maung Maung, was pronounced dead at the scene, while Zin Bo, a 16-year-old student, one of the bike's passengers, was rushed to a nearby hospital where he died during treatment.

The drivers of the tractor and motorbike have been charged under Section 304 (a), 337 and 338 of the Penal Code, with careless driving.—Tin Soe (Bago) ■

Taxi driver escapes from vehicle fire

An taxi caught fire in Kamayut Township, Yangon, in the early morning of Tuesday, 13 February, according to the township Fire Services Department.

The fire occurred in front of the Yangon Institute of Marine Technology on Bayintnaung Road at about 5.54 am. The taxi, driven by U Zeya Tun, 38, caught fire while enroute to Kyimyindaing Township. The cause of the fire was believed to be an overheated engine.

It is not clear whether the taxi was in service at the time,

but it is known that there were no passengers on board.

Authorities say the vehicle was engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived. There were no reported injuries.

The flame was extinguished by firefighters within 10 minutes of their arrival.

Police are still investigating the incident, in an effort to arrest the driver who fled from the scene of the fire. The driver could face legal charges under Section 285 of the Penal Code.—Pwint Thitsa ■



Firefighters try to extinguish the vehicle fire. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

A bomb explosion occurred in Ottara Thiri Township

A bomb explosion occurred on Tuesday in Nay Pyi Taw's Ottara Thiri Township, a police officer from the Ottara Thiri township police station confirmed.

The explosion occurred when a 10-year old child from Kyan Nyaung Tae Su in Sebin Thar village, threw an explosive device into a fire behind his home after he found it while he was playing.

"The boy found an old bomb and he threw it into the fire because he was scared so it was exploded. A 13-year-old girl and an 18-month-old boy, who were sitting near the fire, received minor injuries," the police officer said. They were sent to the Nay Pyi Taw hospital.—Myanmar Digital News ■

Young craft makers display their talents

A COLLECTIVE handicrafts show was held on 13 February in Monywa Township, Sagaing Region, on Myanmar Children's Day, showcasing a wide range of handicrafts made from forest products.

"Efforts were made to display our creations during a group handmade show over the last two years. We receive a lot of knowledge, experience and innovative ideas from this event," said Ko Kwan Kyaw, one of the craft makers from Monywa.

This was the first time Monywa Town hosted the group handmade show, displaying the works of 13 young handicraft makers from different towns, including Yangon, Mandalay, PyinOoLwin, Sagaing, Monywa, Lashio and Rakhine, he added.

The show also aims to inspire the creativity and imagination of children and young people through the creation of handiworks, with the organisers



Visitors look at handicrafts made by young craft makers in Monywa, Sagaing. **PHOTO: WIN OO**

planning to hold similar events in the future.

The show took place at the Kanthaya garden resort in Kagy-

ikwe Ward, Monywa Township, displaying more than 100 types of crafts made of wood, bamboo, fibres, plaster and waste

materials.

The show started at 9 a.m. and continued until 5 p.m.—Win Oo (Zeyataing) ■

About 62,000 SMEs have registered member cards

About 62,000 small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) have registered SME member cards with the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection, according to a report on Monday in the City News Daily.

"Most of the SMEs are registered in the hope of getting loans from us, as we provide loans to SMEs which have operated for at least two years.

"By registering SME member cards, they can access technology and training from us. In our country, most SMEs are not registered. And, some registered not to receive loans, but for government recognition. If they do not register their SME,

it is not safe for their business, said Daw Aye Aye Win, the Director General of the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection.

With SMEs registering, the government can assess the conditions of related industries and identify policy priorities.

If all SMEs are registered, the government will know the exact number of SMEs in different industries, such as agriculture and livestock.

The registration fee for small enterprises is Ks 5,000 and Ks 10,000 for medium enterprises. All SMEs need to extend their SME member cards every two years.—GNLM ■



62,000 SMEs have registered SME member cards with the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAH**

Rubber exports rise sharply

MYANMAR rubber exports crossing through the Muse border gate saw an increase of nearly 20,000 tons in this fiscal year, compared with the same period last year, although the price of raw rubber has fallen in recent months, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Currently, the demand for rubber has been rising in China. As global rubber prices have not significantly declined, the price of rubber in the local market has remained stable at Ks 750 per pound, said an official

from the Ministry.

"Previously, Myanmar exported between 70,000 and 80,000 tons per year. Since last year, Myanmar has exported over 100,000 tons per year. We expected that we can export 150,000 tons of rubber this year," he added.

Last year at this time, the price of rubber was Ks 1,300 per pound. But this year, rubber prices declined to Ks 750 per pound. To charge a high price for rubber, officials need to keep track of rubber prices in Octo-

ber and November, he added.

Myanmar harvests nearly 200,000 tons of rubber annually. China usually buys some 80 per cent of Myanmar's rubber. The other 20 per cent is shipped to Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia. Myanmar rubber is produced mainly in Mon State, Taninthayi Region, Kayin State, the Yangon Region and Bago Region. Currently, Myanmar has more than 1.6 million acres of rubber plantations, as more than 700,000 acres produce latex rubber.—GNLM ■

Plum growers report losses due to decline of plum prices in Mandalay

Plum growers in Mandalay region have reported losses, as plum prices declined to nearly half of last year's prices, according to plum growers from Kyaukse township.

"Last year, the price of plums was between Ks 9,000 and Ks 13,000 per basket. But this year, the price of plums is only Ks 6,500 to Ks 7,000 per basket. Therefore, local plum growers do not even break even on their planting costs", said U Khin Lin, a plum growers from Kyaukse

township.

"Though plums are also being sold in paper boxes, the cost is higher than their being sold in baskets. Last year, plums sold well in the local market. That is why local plum growers increased the amount of their cultivation this year. We have also produced more fruit, and plum traders have bought plums at lower prices. When we do not sell fruit at the lower price, the fruit will spoil on the tree", he added.

Recently, plum traders bought plums directly from farms. Then, they sent them to be sold in Muse, Tamu, Kalay and the upper regions of the Chindwin River through Yangon, Mandalay, Bago and Monywa, annually from December to March. Plums are mainly grown in Mandalay, Magway, the Sagaing regions and Nay Pyi Taw. Brazil apples, also called Loquat and Taiwan plums, have to be picked between January and March.—Myat Thu (AMIA)

Myanmar MoP Local Coordinators Training held in Yangon

THE Myanmar Messengers of Peace (MoP) Local Coordinators Training was held at the Diamond Jubilee Hall of Yangon University yesterday morning.

The MoP training is a collaboration between the Myanmar Scout Association and the Asia-Pacific Regional Scout Committee. Chief Scouts Commissioner Dr. Tin Nyo opened the ceremony with a keynote speech followed by comments from Mr. Paul Parkinson, the Regional Chair of the Asia-Pacific Regional Scout Committee, and Dr. Somboon Bunyasiri from the

Thailand Scout Association. Ko Sa Kyaw Nyi Nyi Zin, a local MoP coordinator, then explained the structure of the training.

Afterwards, scouts and students from various universities in attendance were divided into three groups with Asia-Pacific Scout officials and engaged in practical peace making scenarios. Towards the end of the training, Dr. Tin Nyo, committee members, Chief Scouts, Mr. Parkinson and his committee members exchanged honorary gifts and took a commemorative photo together.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Scouts are seen at opening of Messengers of Peace (MoP) Local Coordinators Training in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

Prosecution witness in Reuters reporters' hearing testifies

THE latest prosecution witness in the hearing to determine whether two detained Reuters reporters should be charged under the Official Secrets Act appeared in court yesterday.

Sub-inspector Myo Ko Ko was the fourth prosecution witness to testify in the proceedings to decide whether reporters Wa Lone, 31, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 27, should be charged under the colonial-era Official Secrets Act.

All the witnesses for the prosecution have so far been police officers. "Two more prosecution witnesses will appear at the court at next hearing,"

said Deputy District Judge Daw Sandar Win. The next hearing is scheduled for 21 February, according to the court.

Wa Lone, also known as Thet Oo Maung, and Kyaw Soe Oo, also known as Moe Aung, with the Yangon bureau of the Reuters news agency, were arrested on 12 December for illegally obtaining and possessing important and secret government documents.

The journalists told relatives they were arrested almost immediately after being handed some papers at a restaurant by two officers they had not met before.—Zaw Gyi ■

Correction

The captions for two photos on Page 13 of yesterday's Global New Light of Myanmar were inadvertently reversed. For the centre photo in the second row, the caption should read: "U Min Tin Win, Minister for Mon Ethnic Affairs". The caption for the photo on the right in the second row should read: "Dr. Min Soe Lin, MP of Mon State Hluttaw". The GNLM regrets the error.— Myanmar News Agency

Heart valve procedure successfully performed at Mandalay General Hospital

Five cardiac patients who were in need of heart valve replacement underwent successful procedures this week using Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) at the cardiac unit of Mandalay General Hospital.

Mandalay General Hospital has been performing operations for patients who are in need of heart valve replacement but cannot tolerate open-heart surgery. The TAVI treatment uses a catheter to insert a new heart valve through an artery.

This recent treatment was made with the help of two cardiologists from Mandalay General Hospital and National University of Singapore (NUS) from February 12-13.

The 12 heart valves used in the procedure were donated by Edward Life Science Co. Ltd. All the procedures were deemed successful, medical officials said.

The following are excerpts from interviews with doctors, cardiologists and patients from Mandalay General Hospital.

Prof. Dr. Than Than Kyaing, Head of the Department of Cardiology, University of Medicine, Mandalay

This is the first time this type of cardiac treatment using Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) has been done in Mandalay. With the help



A patient receives heart valve replacement operation at the Mandalay General Hospital. **PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG**

of Dr. Edgar Tay and Dr. Jimmy Hun from NUS, we could perform the TAVI procedure successfully.

Prof. Dr. Kyaw Soe Win, cardiologist, Mandalay General Hospital

Formerly, this kind of treatment used to take six hours and most of the patients were elderly. Nowadays, in Asia alone, there are 10,000 patients who have received this kind of treatment, and the majority are from Japan, then Singapore. Thanks to this new treatment, the patients will recover within a couple of days.

Dr. Edgar Tay, a cardiologist from Singapore

The reasons why I come here is to treat the patients who are suffering from cardiology. As far as I know, the doctors from this hospital are well experienced and helpful. I see that all my patients are getting better and pleased it after the operation.

UBoMaung, cardiac patient

I suffer from heart disease and went to Mandalay General Hospital. Due to my old age, I couldn't undergo the operation. Now, a new valve has been transplanted without any surgery and I am feeling better now. So I want to say that I am very grateful to those who helped me.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay) ■



Chinese dancers perform at the National Theatre in Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**

Spectacular Chinese New Year theatre in Yangon

A show of dance, song, folk music and acrobatics were performed by Myanmar and Chinese performers at the National Theatre in Dagon Township, Yangon last night.

Attending the event were Yangon Region Parliament Deputy Speaker U Lin Na-

ing Myint, Permanent secretary Ministry of Religion Affairs and Culture U Tun Ohn, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Hong Liang, Tatmadaw officials, foreign ambassadors and invited guests.

Mr. Hong Liang delivered

an opening speech followed by remarks from U Tun Ohn.

The evening's entertainment began with various plays, songs, folk music, acrobatic performances and dances from both Chinese and Myanmar traditions.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Suzuki bets on remodeled eco car to rev up sales in Thailand

BANGKOK — Japan’s Suzuki Motor Corp has launched a remodeled environmentally-friendly Swift hatchback in Thailand, aiming to increase its eco car sales to grab around a 20 per cent share of the segment in South-east Asia’s second largest auto market.

Suzuki Motor (Thailand) Co, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Japanese carmaker, said it expects to almost double sales of cars in the Swift series from 8,080 units last year to 15,700 this year with the first release of the third-generation All New Suzuki Swift model in the region. Senior officials of the local unit foresee new car sales in Thailand this year growing 3.4 per cent from 2017 to over 900,000 units while predicting the eco car segment will surge 15.2 per cent to 180,000 ve-



Suzuki Motor (Thailand) Co, a wholly owned subsidiary of Japan’s Suzuki Motor Corp, unveils a remodeled environmentally-friendly third-generation Swift hatchback at its launch event in Bangkok on 8 February, 2018. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

hicles.

The Thai subsidiary’s

eco car sales grew 13.4 per cent to 21,300 units last

year, grabbing a market share of 13.6 per cent. It

expects to keep up momentum for a further gain

in 2018 on the back of the first release of a new Swift model in six years.

Two other eco car models — the 1.25-liter Ciaz sedan and 1.0-liter Celerio hatchback — sold 12,000 and 1,800 units last year, respectively.

The new Swift has a 1,200 cc engine, with prices ranging from 499,000 to 629,000 baht (\$15,800 to \$20,000), targeted at those aged 21 to 39. The local unit produces the remodeled car at its plant in Rayong province, southeast of Bangkok, and is planning to export it from April to Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. It forecast that 4,000 units will be exported in the first year. Suzuki Motor has simultaneously released the same model in India, produced at a local plant. —Kyodo News ■

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V OLYMPIA VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OLYMPIA VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-2-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-1 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S’PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V FSL SANTOS VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V FSL SANTOS VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-2-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-2 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA
SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SIMA PERFECT VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-2-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GLODEN SEA
SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HARDIAH VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HARDIAH VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-2-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-3 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 ADVANCE CONTAINER
LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. ()

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BLPL TRUST VOY. NO. () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-2-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of BSW 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 BLPL SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. (013 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. (013 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-2-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP 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 CONTINENTAL
SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

Russian Navy to get large amphibious assault ship by late spring



The warship can carry 13 main battle tanks or 36 armoured personnel carriers, or up to 300 marines. **PHOTO: TASS**

MOSCOW — The large amphibious assault ship Ivan Gren is scheduled for delivery to the Russian Navy by the end of spring, Head of the United Ship-Building Corporation Alexei Rakhmanov told reporters on 9 Friday. “We are expecting any minute, so to speak. The task is to complete all the measures. I won’t give any specific timeframe but I believe that we are to complete everything by the end of spring,” he said.

Sergei Mikhailov, spokesman for the Yantar Shipyard on the Baltic

coast, which is building the Ivan Gren, earlier told TASS that the warship’s state trials were expected to be completed in late February. The Project 11711 large amphibious assault lead ship Ivan Gren was developed by the Nevskoye Design Bureau in St Petersburg in northwest Russia. It was laid down by the Yantar Shipyard in Kaliningrad in west Russia in December 2004 and launched in May 2012. Its sea trials began in June 2016.

On 30 November, 2017, the large amphibious assault ship Ivan Gren start-

ed undergoing state trials in the Baltic Sea.

The warship can carry 13 main battle tanks or 36 armoured personnel carriers (infantry fighting vehicles), or up to 300 marines. The amphibious assault ship can also transport a reinforced marine infantry company with organic military hardware and land it with the use of pontoons.

The amphibious assault ship Ivan Gren is armed with 30mm six-barrel artillery systems and two Kamov Ka-29 transport/attack helicopters in its deck hangars.—Tass ■

Cuba prepares to end dual currency system

HAVANA — For more than two decades, Cubans have used a unique dual currency system to protect a fragile economy, but with just weeks of his mandate remaining, President Raul Castro has signaled much-delayed change is finally coming.

Plans to scrap the divisive system were first mooted in 2003 as part of a series of market-oriented reforms introduced by Castro, who is due to step down in April. Now, after years of delays, authorities on the Caribbean island are finally expected to bite the bullet and begin consoli-

dating the two currencies, despite fears of a shock to the economy. “This issue has taken us too long and it cannot be delayed any longer,” Castro said in a speech in December. The government has resisted any commitment to a timetable, but many observers believe a meeting of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party (PCC) next month will finally set the process in motion.

The country has had two currencies since 1994 when it introduced the Cuban Convertible Peso, or CUC — alongside the

Cuban Peso, the CUP — as part of measures to protect the economy in the wake of the collapse of its biggest sponsor, the Soviet Union.

The CUC, originally used exclusively for foreign trade and in the tourism industry before gradually seeping into the normal economy, is worth about 25 times the CUP and pegged to the dollar.

The dual currencies created a two-tier class system in Cuba, which favored those with access to the lucrative tourist sector through hotels, restaurants and foreign trade.—AFP ■

Dutch FM resigns triggering vote of no-confidence

THE HAGUE — Dutch Foreign Minister Halbe Zijlstra resigned on Tuesday after admitting lying, triggering a political bombshell and a vote of no-confidence in the country’s prime minister.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte overwhelmingly survived the vote brought by his arch-foe far-right politician Geert Wilders, with 101 MPs against and only 43 in favour.

But the scandal has erupted in just a few days in the Netherlands, and threatens to undermine Rutte’s fledgling and fragile four-party coalition.

The drama came after Zijlstra admitted he had falsely claimed to have attended a 2006 meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

“This is by far the biggest mistake I have made in my career,” he told the lower house of parliament, adding tearfully that he had no option but to resign.

Rutte then found himself in the firing line, when MPs grilled him about why he had not informed parliament sooner after being told about Zijlstra’s deception on 29 January.

“It was an error of judgement on my part,” Rutte said. “I didn’t think this affair would have such a political fallout. I under-



Halbe Zijlstra leaves the Dutch parliament after he announcing his resignation as foreign minister. **PHOTO: AFP**

estimated the impact of this lie.”

Lack of experience

Zijlstra, a member of Rutte’s Liberal VVD party, had only been in the post for four months, and his appointment in October had already raised eyebrows due his lack of experience.

His resignation came just hours before he was set to leave for Moscow to meet with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

They had been due to discuss among other things the 2014 downing of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 shot down by a missile fired from territory held by pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine.

The tragedy in which all 298 people on board died, most of them Dutch, has soured ties and led to accusations that Moscow is not being truthful about the events.

A Dutch foreign min-

istry official told AFP that the Moscow “meeting will not go ahead, for obvious reasons” and they would try to look “at a later date”.

Stepping down, Zijlstra told MPs on Tuesday that the credibility of the country’s foreign minister must be “beyond doubt, both inside and outside of the country”.

He resigned after finally admitting that his long-held claim to have attended a 2006 meeting in Putin’s dacha, which included Jeroen van der Veer, Shell’s former chief executive, was false. “I have spoken about an incident of great importance, saying I was there in person, while that was not the case,” Zijlstra told MPs on Tuesday. “I wanted to tell this story convincingly without revealing my source, it was obviously the wrong choice. I should not have done it. I am sorry.”—AFP ■

Notice Inviting Objection on the Change of Trade Names

The trade name of the products, DuPont™ Prevathon® (Registration number - 2015-2151) and DuPont™ Ammate® (Registration number - P2017-3341) acquired from DuPont Company Singapore Pte. Ltd., by FMC Corporation (USA) will be change in the following;

Tradename	
Current	After change
DuPont™ Ammate®	Ammate®
DuPont™ Prevathon®	Prevathon®

Myanmar Arysta LifeScience Co., Ltd. remains as official distributor of FMC Corporation (USA) for these products. Myanmar Arysta LifeScience Co., Ltd. invites objections to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from all parties within a period of fourteen (14) days from the publication of this notice, with copies of such documents and other proofs in support of their objections. If no objections are received within the period prescribed above, parties mentioned above shall proceed with the completion of formalities recorded with the Pesticide Registration Board.

Myanmar Arysta LifeScience Co; Ltd.
No 95, Padonmar Street, Dagon Tsp, Yangon, Myanmar.
Tel: +951256193

Largest human image of Myanmar breaks Guinness World Records title

THE largest human image of Myanmar, organized by Telenor Myanmar at the sports grounds in Magway on 12 February 2018 was recorded in the 2018 Guinness World Records.

The image of Myanmar measuring 234ft in length and 106 ft in width in the space of 24,804 sq ft was shaped by 3,466 people including students. It became the first ever mass gathering to create an image of a country or a continent to break the Guinness World Records title in Myanmar.

"The reason why we chose Magway to shape the image of Myanmar is that Natmuk Town, is the birthplace of Myan-

mar's independence hero General Aung San. The event was held to mark the 71st anniversary of Union Day," said an official from Telenor Myanmar Co, Ltd. In September 2016, 811 people teamed up to create image of the Africa continent, setting a Guinness World Records title.

There are other recipients of Guinness World Record titles in Myanmar such as Mingun Sayadaw U Vicittasrabivamsa, a record holder in the human memory category, the largest sapphire in the world, the heaviest bell in the world called Mingun Bell and the people with the longest necks.—Myanmar Digital News ■



Largest human image of Myanmar is seen at the sports grounds in Magway on 12 Feb. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**



in
Picture

Anawratha Street in downtown is festooned with red lanterns in celebration of the 2018 Chinese New Year on Friday, 16 February. **PHOTO: MARK ANGELES**

A delegation from Thai Red Cross Association researchs in Mrauk-U



Thai delegation observes architecture at a pagoda in Mrauk-U, Rakhine State on 14 February, 2018. **PHOTO: MDN**

A delegation from the Thai Red Cross Association visited the Mrauk-U yesterday. This area has many ancient pagodas, breathtaking natural landscapes and traditional customs and heritages of ethnic people.

Mr. Tej Bunnag, a delegate from Thai Red Cross Association said "I enjoyed the Mrauk-U trip because I was surprised at seeing and experiencing Rakhine's architecture and heritage and I'm very pleased to see these ancient icons up close."

The number of pilgrims and visitors to Mrauk-U rose than year by year.—Myanmar Digital News

Shinhan Bank awards scholarships to Yangon and Mandalay universities students

ON 6 and 9 of February, Shinhan Bank awarded scholarships to 60 outstanding students from Yangon and Mandalay Universities of Foreign Languages for the academic year of 2017.

Since 2014, Shinhan Bank has given scholarships to a total of 240 students in Yangon and Mandalay University of Foreign Languages for their educational development and in recognition of their academic talent.

Shinhan Bank is continuously performing corporate social responsibilities in Myanmar.

Recently, Shinhan Bank donated an ambulance and sponsored the third programme of cleft lip and palate surgeries

as well as congenital heart disease open heart surgeries for the Seoul National University of Republic of Korea in Yankin Children's Hospital in 2017 and 2018.

Shinhan Bank has also sponsored the sport jerseys for the Myanmar National football Team in the Incheon Asian Games and constructed a new primary school in Hlegu Township with KOICA. Since September 2016, Shinhan Bank is the only Korean bank providing foreign corporate banking services. Moreover, Shinhan Bank also promotes investment to the foreign investors in Myanmar by providing various kinds of services. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Students from Yangon and Mandalay Universities of Foreign Languages pose for a documentary photo at the ceremony of Shinhan Bank Scholarship Awarding to outstanding students. **PHOTO: MNA**

Nishikori through to 2nd round at New York Open

NEW YORK — Japan's Kei Nishikori safely advanced to the second round of the inaugural New York Open on Tuesday, beating American wildcard Noah Rubin 7-5, 6-3 in his opening game.

Nishikori is competing in his first ATP World Tour event since sustaining a right wrist injury last August. The 1.75-metre Noah, ranked 232nd in the world, forced Nishikori to come back after seizing a 3-0, first-set lead.

With a crucial break in the 11th game, Nishikori turned the tide and took advantage of Rubin's mistakes in the second set.

"It was the best game I've played since I returned," Nishikori said.

"There are still areas I need work on such as my feel for the game and how I enter the match, but it's gradually getting better. This is where it starts getting harder," he said.

The 12-18 February tournament at Nassau Coliseum in Long Island is the first ATP World Tour event to use black-colored hard courts. Since his return to competition in late January, the 28-year-old Nishikori has competed in Challenge Tour events while aiming to regain his position in the top tier. He won the Challenger event in Dallas earlier this month.



Japanese tennis player Kei Nishikori returns a shot against Noah Rubin of the United States in the first round of the New York Open ATP World Tour Tennis Tournament in New York on 13 February, 2018.

PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Nishikori reached fourth in the men's singles world rankings less than a year ago but now finds himself 27th.

He will face 72nd-ranked Evgeny Donskoy of Russia in his next match on Wednesday.—Kyodo News ■

Football Association of Wakema formed for Ayeyawady Region

THE football Association of Wakema was formed yesterday with the aim to promote standard of football not only in the Ayeyawady Region but also for the whole country, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

The association was formed with 25 members, including the president of the association, township administrator U Htet Aung Hlaing, chairman Dr. Win Zaw, football officials, officials from Township's Physical and Education Departments and

township elders. The purpose of the team's meeting yesterday was to elect members and also to discuss future plans.

The Football Association of Wakema is the 14th Association of the Ayeyawady Region. Wakema is a town in the Ayeyawady Division of south-west Myanmar. It is the seat of the Wakema Township in the Myaungmya District. Wakema is also the hometown of Sayadaw U Pannya Vamsa, a notable Buddhist missionary.—KyawZin Lin ■

MNL Week 6 matches includes Shan United vs Ayeyawaddy

THE football matches in Week 6 of the MPT Myanmar National League 2018 starting on 17 February include the much anticipated contest between defending champion Shan United and Ayeyawaddy United at Ayeyawaddy's home stadium.

The matches on 17 February are Myawady vs Yadanabon at Thuwunna Stadium, Southern Myanmar against Rakhine United at Mawlamyaing Stadium, and Hanthawady United vs Zwegapin United at the Grand Royal Stadium of Bago.

The matches on 18 February are Ayeyawady United vs Shan United at Patheingyi Stadium, Yangon United against GFA at YUSC Stadium, and Magwe against Sagaing United at Aung San Stadium. The matches between Shan and Ayeyawaddy and Hanthawady vs Zwegapin will be broadcast live on state-run television, while the other matches will be live-streamed on the Facebook pages of the MNL or the Myanmar Football Federation, said an MNL official.—KyawZin Lin ■

Allegri irritated by criticism as Juve fail to kill off Spurs

TURIN — Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri insisted he would not be getting depressed despite criticism at failing to land the killer blow against Tottenham in their Champions League last 16, first leg clash in Turin.

"If anyone thought that Juventus would win 4-0 this evening he was way off track," blasted Allegri, after his more experienced side threw away a dream start with two Gonzalo Higuain goals inside ten minutes to end with a 2-2 draw in front of their frustrated fans at the Allianz Stadium.

"The Champions League is a dream and an objective, but winning it is not easy. I think people

have lost some objectivity here. Juve play to win, but they are not the favourites. You can't reach the final every year," said Allegri.

Higuain got the first goal after 73 seconds, and minutes later added a second from the spot after Ben Davies' foul on Federico Bernardeschi.

But Harry Kane revived Spurs hopes after half an hour, with his seventh goal in the competition this season, rounding flattened goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon.

Higuain missed a second penalty before the break following Serge Aurier's reckless challenge on Douglas Costa to keep

the English side in the game.

Christian Eriksen scored Tottenham's second goal from a free-kick after centre-back Giorgio Chiellini fouled Dele Alli, sending it low past a wrong-footed Buffon, leaving all to play for in Wembley on 7 March.

"It's like we lost 8-0 — good doctors are needed, not one, but many very, very good," Allegri berated journalists at the post-match press conference.

"Football is like this, we went from 3-0 to 2-1, we had a 3-1 penalty and instead Tottenham equalised 2-2," explained Allegri of the game. "I believe the lads are putting in a fantastic season, but that's a long way off thinking

they can win a last 16 match by a 3-0 scoreline."

Three-pronged attack

Juventus are bidding for a seventh straight Serie A title this season, and are just one point off leaders Napoli. They are also in the running for a fourth straight Italian Cup, and to reach the final of the Champions League for the third time in four years.

"People must realise that winning is not normality, it is extraordinary," continued the former AC Milan boss.

"I will not accept that tonight's 2-2 draw could depress the Juve fans. There are some scary ups and downs in the mood here.

"This really irritates me, because people have no idea of how teams function. The primary objective is the Scudetto: it's not easy. Then we'll try to go forward in the Champions League.

"It was always 50:50 with Tottenham and it still is."

Spurs boss Mauricio Pochettino said his side "showed character" in a competition where their best finish was the semi-finals in 1962.

"We've shown great personality against a team that has played two finals in the last three years, my players have been fantastic.

"Now it'll be like a final in London."—AFP ■