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President U Win Myint welcomes Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Indian Minister of External Affairs, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

President U Win Myint receives Indian Minister of External Affairs

PRESIDENT U Win Myint received a delegation led by Indian Minister of External Affairs Ms. Sushma Swaraj at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed bilater-

al relations between the two countries, Rakhine State development and the peace process, cooperation in the investment and trade sectors, as well as upgrading the socio-economic life of people along the border.

The meeting was also at-

tended by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing, Union Minister for International

Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and other officials. Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Vikram Misri was also in attendance, together with the delegation led by the Indian Minister of External Affairs.—Myanmar News Agency ■

JMC-U holds 16th meeting at NRPC in Yangon

By Zaw Gyi

THE Union-level Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC-U) held its 16th meeting at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) in Yangon yesterday morning, where the outbreak of conflict between Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) signatories was discussed, among other issues.

The meeting was attended by JMC-U Chairman Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and Tatmadaw representatives Lt-Gen Aye Win, Lt-Gen Than Tun Oo and Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Soe, JMC-U Vice Chairman (1) Saw Isaac Po and heads of ethnic armed organizations, JMC-U Vice Chairman (2) U Pyae Sone and civilian representatives and members of the technical assistance office.

In his message of greetings to the meeting, JMC-U Chairman Lt-Gen Yar Pyae said there are pre-selected programmes for the meeting, as well as continued open discussions on policies that were the result of yesterday's general meeting. The chairman primarily urged open discussion on future works in implementing JMC works and

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Pyithu Hluttaw speaker addresses leadership discussion in Nay Pyi Taw

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker and Chairman of the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) on Hluttaw Development U T Khun Myat attended and delivered an opening speech on “Leadership Dis-

cussion” at Zabuthiri Hall of the Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Aung, alias U Tun Tun Hein, region/state Hluttaw

speakers and deputy speakers, and officials from the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw, the Amyotha Hluttaw and UNDP also attended the discussion. — Myanmar News Agency ■



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat delivers the speech at the leadership discussion. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw holds Joint Bill Committee meeting

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee held a meeting on the Revenue Appellate Tribunal Bill at the second-floor meeting hall of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Building D, yesterday afternoon. The meeting was attended by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy

Speaker and Joint Bill Committee Chairman U Aye Tha Aung; deputy chairmen; secretary; joint secretary and committee members; Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission members; officials from the Union Supreme Court Office, Min-

istry of Planning and Finance, Union Attorney-General's Office, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw office.—MNA ■

Ministry of Health and Sports discusses WHO funds

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe led a meeting on 9 May to discuss better management of the World Health Organisation (WHO) funds for the public, along with officials from WHO Myanmar, directors-general, deputy directors-general, project managers and officials from different departments.

The meeting also discussed ways to receive increased WHO funding, in line with set rules and regulations. WHO supports health funds to Myanmar biennially, with the two most recent rounds of funding being once in the fiscal year 2016-2017 and once in the fiscal year 2018-2019. To be eligible for these health funds, Myanmar also has to contribute US\$40,000 to WHO funds annually. At the meeting, the union minister requested the professionals working at WHO Myanmar to work harder in providing health assistance to Myanmar. He added that he would also discuss this with the director-general from the WHO headquarters and Di-

rector of WHO Southeast Asia Regional office. The union minister said the focal person from WHO's financial department and their project managers will be in constant contact to review the rules and regulations set by the head of WHO's financial department, which usually changes with a change in leadership.

The current rules and regulations set by WHO allows funds to be allotted in separate transactions, as opposed to delivering the entire amount of funding in one go. The first transaction is calculated on the country's current project cost estimates. Once the first half of funding is spent or the projects are completed on time, WHO sends the second half of the total funds. The union minister urged the departmental project managers to provide the best service possible to the public, while finding ways to complete their projects on time or before the deadline, if possible. The union minister said if they are unable to utilise the allotted

funds from WHO on time, the remaining funds will either be sent to other countries or reclaimed by WHO, adding that requesting for increased funding in the future might then be more difficult. The union minister asked WHO Myanmar officials and the departmental project managers to collaborate on acquiring private donations given by WHO on behalf of private donors. The union minister concluded his speech by requesting all the officials concerned to increase their performance in their relevant fields.

Next, WHO Myanmar Public Health Administrator Dr. Mohammad Shahjahan and National Professional Officer Dr. Myo Paing explained the current WHO financial rules and regulations, the available opportunities for increased funding, and further collaboration between WHO officials and departmental project managers. This was followed by an open discussion with the attendants.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat shakes hands with Mr. Bhim K. Udas, Ambassador of Nepal in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pyithu Hluttaw speaker receives Nepali Ambassador

PYITHU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat received the Nepali Ambassador Mr. Bhim K. Udas at the Pyithu Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed the promotion of bilateral relations between the parliaments of the two countries, cooperation in

the investment, trade and travel sectors, and establishment of the Nepal-Myanmar Friendship Association.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Aung, alias U Tun Tun Hein, and officials from the Pyithu Hluttaw office also attended the meeting. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun holds talks with WHO delegation at the Ministry of Information yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun receives WHO mission

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun received the World Health Organisation (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) Need Assessment Mission at the guest hall of the Ministry of Information yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed increasing the momentum of implementing the reduction in consumption

of cigarettes and tobacco products under the FCTC's 2030: Strategy Myanmar, programmes that the Ministry of Information can conduct to inform the public of the adverse effects of cigarettes and tobacco products on the society, economy and health, and establishing good practices and habits.—Myanmar News Agency ■

“Our country is still in poverty with necessities in every sector; which is why we need to carry on our struggle and work hard in all sectors. In the international arena, we are facing pressure, criticisms and misunderstandings. The challenges and difficulties our country and our people are facing today are many. Although every issue cannot be solved easily, we will have to make utmost efforts to solve these issues according to each priority sector.

(Excerpt from the speech by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to take oath of office at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 30th March 2018)

“We face various kinds of internal and external challenges while we endeavor for political, economic and social development of our country. As we are aware of the importance of our international responsibility, we have adopted a path consistent with the needs and situation of our country respecting at the same time the views and opinions of the international community.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the 2nd Anniversary of NLD Government on 1st April 2018)

14th AMRI meeting held in Singapore from 7 to 11 May

A DELEGATION led by Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint attended the 14th Conference of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) and related meetings held at Shangri-la Hotel in Singapore from 7 to 11 May.

The ministers, senior officials responsible for information in ASEAN member countries and delegation members, officials and heads of departments from Singapore attended the opening ceremony of the 14th Conference of AMRI and other related meetings at Shangri-La Hotel at 9 a.m. yesterday. The ceremony started with the playing of the ASEAN anthem “The ASEAN Way.”

At the ceremony, ASEAN alternate chairman Singapore Minister for Communications and Information S. Iswaran and Minister for Finance Heng Swee Keat greeted the attendees and took commemorative group photographs with the attending ASEAN ministers for information.

Next, the 14th AMRI meeting and other related meetings were held at Shangri-La Hotel, where information ministers, high-ranking officials and other officials from the plus three countries, China, Japan and Republic of Korea, were also in attendance.

The five meetings hosted by



ASEAN Information Ministers pose for a group photo at the 14th ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information meeting in Singapore. **PHOTO: MNA**

Singapore were the 14th AMRI meeting, 5th AMRI+3 Meeting, 16th Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting Responsible for Information (16th SOMRI), 5th SOMRI+3 Meeting and 2nd Meeting of ASEAN-Japan Senior Officials Meeting Responsible for Information (2nd ASEAN+-Japan SOMRI).

Ministry of Information Per-

manent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung attended the SOMRI meetings held from 8 to 9 May.

These meetings were held with the aim to increase and strengthen mutual understanding and trust among the ASEAN member countries through sharing of information related to the works of the ASEAN region and the plus three countries.

This year, the members discussed the ASEAN information projects; related and associated meetings; review of the present works, plans for future works, and AMRI's review, comments and confirmation of the SOMRI report to realise the 14th AMRI theme of “Inclusive and Informed Digital ASEAN.”

The AMRI meeting started

in 1989 and is held once every two years in ASEAN countries alphabetically. The 12th AMRI meeting and its related meetings and the 13th SOMRI were hosted in Nay Pyi Taw and the Ayeyawady Region Ngwehsaung in 2014.

The 15th AMRI meeting and related meetings will be hosted by Thailand in 2020.—Myanmar News Agency ■



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edited.

A tourist takes a photo at Mya Nan San Kyaw Golden Palace in Mandalay. PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE

Mandalay Region may get over 500,000 tourists this fiscal year

The Mandalay Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism is expecting more than 500,000 tourists to visit the Mandalay Region this fiscal year, according to a report in Myawady Daily yesterday.

According to the record, more than 200,000 tourists vis-

ited the Mandalay Region from January through the first week of May 2018. Most tourists were from China, as well as France, Thailand, Germany, the United States, Italy, Japan and South Korea.

Mandalay hosted more than 300,000 tourists in 2016, while

the region welcomed more than 500,000 tourists in 2017. Therefore, the department is expecting more than 500,000 tourists to visit Mandalay this year.

The Mandalay Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism is establishing new destinations and supervising systematically

the sustainable development of the environment conservation programme.

Top tourist attractions in the city include the Mandalay Hill, Mya Nan San Kyaw Golden Palace, Maha Muni Buddha Image and U Being Bridge.—GNLM ■

YCDC to cooperate with IFC to improve construction permit system

THE Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) will cooperate with International Finance Corporation (IFC) to update procedures on issuing construction permits in the Yangon Region, according to a report in Myawady Daily yesterday.

With its vast experience in reforming the construction permit systems globally, the IFC is well-positioned to help Yangon draw property investors by establishing a streamlined process. The reform will reduce administrative bottlenecks and increase Myanmar's management capacity, thus promoting sustainable private sector development and creating jobs.

"An efficient, transparent

and affordable permit system can lead to a healthy, competitive and sustainable construction sector," said Vikram Kumar, IFC country manager for Myanmar.

In the Doing Business 2018 report, Myanmar is ranked 70 for issuing construction permits. Myanmar's construction sector, according to a recent World Bank study, accounts for some five per cent of the workforce and has the highest earning potential, compared to other sectors.

Apart from creating jobs, the sector supports the development of vital infrastructure projects and other industries, such as manufacturing and tourism.—GNLM ■

Light trucks banned from ferrying students to school

THE Yangon Region Transport Authority will no longer allow the use of light trucks to ferry students to school in the coming fiscal year, according to a report in Myawady Daily yesterday.

YRTA and officials of basic education schools recently met to discuss school buses. They also agreed to upgrade the new system from the next academic year.

"The school bus system will be launched in the coming academic year and will be mainly applicable for schools in downtown areas. We will not allow the use of light trucks to ferry school students," said a YRTA official.

Only left-hand drive micro

buses, mini buses and buses with a seating capacity of 10 persons and above will be allowed to be used as a ferry service.

Private cars can transport the school students, but they will not be permitted to park near schools.

Schools buses must be installed with a GPS and CCTV cameras for the safety of children. The school buses will be launched in 22 basic education schools located in the most crowded areas of the town.

The Yangon Region government bought some 200 units of Hyundai cars under the government-to-government system from Posco Daewoo Corporation.—GNLM ■

Local, foreign businessmen invited to invest in new urban development projects of Yangon Region

By May Thet Hnin

LOCAL and foreign businessmen are welcome to invest in the new urban development projects of the Yangon zone master plan, said U Than, who is the joint secretary of Yangon City Development Committee and a member of Yangon Region Investment Committee.

U Than was speaking during the Yangon Investment Forum held on 9 May.

Sub-centres, new towns, railway stations and industrial zones will be established as part of the new urban development plan.

The sub-centre projects are planned for Mindama Secondary central business district (CBD), Yankin Sub-centre, Thilawa SEZ Sub-centre, Dagon Myothit Sub-centre and Dagon Seikkan Sub-centre. The trade centre, convention centre, social service centre, R&D logistics, information technology and software centre, commercial, business and tourism centres, a sports complex, an amusement park and an inland port will be established in the central business districts.

The new town projects are planned for Thilawa New City, Southwest New City (west side of Kyimyindine), Dagon East New City and Dala New City.



A house seen at Dala Township. The new town projects are planned for Thilawa New City, Southwest New City (west side of Kyimyindine), Dagon East New City and Dala New City. **PHOTO: GNLM/PHOE KHWAH**

Next, the railway station area development projects will be carried out near and around Yangon Central Railway Station, Kyimyindine railway station, Insein railway station, Yegu railway station and Mingaladon railway station, as well as the Emblem station of the nation, Gateway of CBD, commercial and business function accumulated station, transit node station from surrounding areas and the intercity terminal station projects.

Businessmen can invest in

the Thilawa Special Economic Zone and new industrial zones, besides the existing industrial zones.

The Yangon urban development master plan will prioritise 42 projects at an estimated cost of US\$2.6 billion. Among the priority projects are nine urban development projects, 10 central business district renovation projects and nine social service and management projects. Some \$885 million have been allocated to implement the 25 projects for the urban development manage-

ment sector. The remaining 17 projects are in the infrastructure development sector, at an estimated spending of \$1.802 billion.

“The Yangon development vision is to make it an international hub city, a well-managed infrastructure city, a comfortable city and a city of good-governance,” said U Than.

“The urban structure includes decentralisation, which means the urban centre function will be dispersed to the outer areas. The Yangon Region will design a national road network

and also, it is planned to extend this project to the southern seaport,” he maintained.

Additionally, businessmen can invest in the proposed projects, such as the smart and eco city project in northeast of Yangon, the Dagon East modernised industrial zone in Dagon Myothit (east and south), the low cost and affordable housing project in Twantay Township, the Yangon South West New City project in Twantay and Kyimyindine townships, government employees’ housing projects in Dagon Seikkan Township, Sagyiwa transport hub projects in Mingaladon Township, and Dry port and ICD projects in Ngwepinle and Hline-thaya townships.

Some 11 new industrial zones will be established outside Yangon city.

“We conducted a feasibility study of the land use plan. We will avoid favouritism by not divulging information and prevent monopoly. We disclosed information to the public as they have a right to know and express freely their feelings concerning the projects. This being so, we will reveal to them in advance,” said the Yangon Region chief minister.

The Yangon Region is the commercial hub city attracting local and foreign investments. It helps support 23 per cent of the GDP of the country. ■

Border trade at Muse gate up by \$17 million in April

MYANMAR’s trade value with China via the Muse border camp was US\$273 million between 1 and 27 April during the transition period of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, according to figures released by the commerce ministry.

Among Myanmar’s border checkpoints, Muse gate wit-

nessed the largest trade with China. Trade value through Muse, as of 27 April, increased by \$17 million compared to the same period last FY.

Besides Muse gate, Myanmar carries out border trade with China via Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Kanpiketee and Kengtung checkpoints.

The Sino-Myanmar trade value through the five border gates this FY reached \$311 million, which is an increase of \$30 million compared to last FY.

The trade values registered at various gates were \$21 million at Lweje, \$16 million at Chinshwehaw, \$33.7 million at Kanpiketee and \$0.204 million

at Kengtung.

Rice, various types of peas, sesame seeds, corn, vegetables and fruits, dried tea leaves, fishery products, rubber, minerals and animal products are exported to China, whereas machinery, plastic raw materials, consumer products and electronic tools flow into Myanmar.—Ko Htet ■

Thai-Myanmar border trade value exceeds \$110 mln last month

TRADE at the Thai-Myanmar border gates was worth some US\$111 million from 1 to 27 April of the six-month transition period for the 2018-2019 FY, which increased by some \$40 million compared

to last FY.

Border trade values were worth \$4.47 million at the Tachilek gate, \$54 million at Myawady, \$20.59 million at Kawthoung, \$30.89 million at Myeik, \$0.48 million at Hteekhee,

\$0.63 million at Mawtaung and \$0.06 million at Maese.

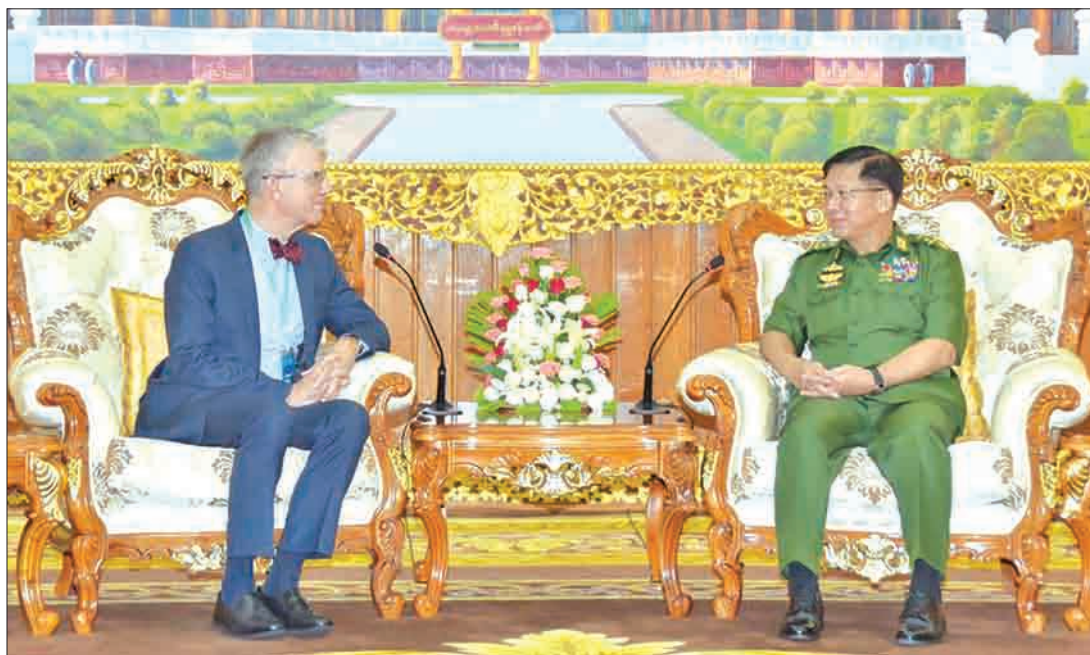
Industrial machinery, trucks, agricultural equipment, tractors, motorcycles, cars, food and beverages, cosmetics, fuel oil, fertilisers, cement, con-

struction materials and sugar for re-export are imported through the Myawady gate. Fish, prawns, crabs, onions, sesame, turmeric, herbs and forestry products are sent to Thailand.—Htet Myat ■

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Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with Swiss Ambassador Mr. Paul R. Seger in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives Swiss Ambassador

SENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, received Swiss Ambassador Mr. Paul R. Seger at the Bayint Naung

Guesthouse in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to Swiss assistance and partici-

pation in the Myanmar peace process and the situation in Buthidaung and Maungdaw in Rakhine State. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Chinese Public Security Minister visits Shwedagon Pagoda

A DELEGATION led by Mr. Zhao Kezhi, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Minister of Public Security, who was in Yangon, visited Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday morning.

Next, the Chinese minister arrived in Latha Township Police Station and was welcomed by senior police personnel from the Yangon Region Police Force. The visitors were briefed about the status of the police works conducted through a Power-Point presentation by Police Brig-Gen Win Naing.

Later, the Chinese Minister of Public Security donated two laptops to the police station, inspected the layout of the police station, the detention centre at the police station and the patrol car donated by the People's Republic of China.



Chinese Minister of Public Security Mr. Zhao Kezhi and delegation visit Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Later in the afternoon, the Chinese Minister visited Huawei Technology Co. Ltd. in Myanmar Plaza, Yangon, and then left Yangon in the evening. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Apology

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation would like to apologise for an error in an article on Page 2 in the 10 May 2018 edition of the Global New Light of

Myanmar. in the article titled "Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation receives chairman of China Huaneng Group Co., Ltd", instead of China

Huaneng Group Co., Ltd the correct name should be Huaneng Lancang River Hydropower Inc. —Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation ■

Indian Minister of External Affairs arrives in Nay Pyi Taw

A DELEGATION led by Indian Minister of External Affairs Ms. Sushma Swaraj arrived in Nay Pyi Taw at 2 p.m. yesterday and was welcomed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary U Myint Thu and Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Vikram Misri at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport.

Later in the evening, Union Minister for International

Cooperation U Kyaw Tin hosted a dinner for the Indian minister and her delegation at Shwe San Eain Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

The dinner was also attended by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Industry U Khin Maung Cho, Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw and other officials. — MNA ■



Indian Minister of External Affairs Ms. Sushma Swaraj arrives at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Wholesale, retail foreign companies permitted to operate in Myanmar

THE Ministry of Commerce will permit wholesale and retail foreign companies and joint Myanmar-foreign ventures to operate in the country.

The government has issued notice 25/2018 dated 9 May regarding the same.

The aim is to promote fair competition, give more choices to the consumer, reduce prices, raise the quality of goods and services distributed, assist local

products acquire market share and develop small and medium enterprises.

Companies — foreign, local or joint Myanmar-foreign ventures — that conduct wholesale and retail sales must follow the rules and regulations attached to the notice. The amendments to the rules and regulations will be made and announced occasionally. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Police apprehend 10 illegal migrants in Ayeyawady Region

ACTING on a tip, the police apprehended two illegal migrants near a creek, six miles east of KoneGyi Village in Hinthada District, Ayeyawady Region, on 9 May. The two men were Ayun Ali alias Hla Kyaw from OhntawGyi camp for displaced persons in Sittway Township, and Abdula alias Maung Kyaw Win from Thetkepyan Village in Sittway Township.

After interrogating the two men, the police found that eight other illegal migrants had also

entered the area. Yesterday, the police apprehended Zawki Ahmed alias Kyaw Naing, Jaung Bo alias Maung Hla, Mahmud Jabel alias Hla Kyaw, Zanura Baegum alias Khin Khin Nu, Bi Bi Asha alias Hla Hla Sein, Kaw Reema Baegum alias Hla Hla Myint, Ara Baegum alias Than Than Nu, and Shaw Bikhha Baegum alias Ma Ma Aye near KoneGyi Village. The police are conducting further investigations in the case. —Kyaw Kyaw (District IPRD) ■

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Yangon will grow, but only with responsible investment

YANGON is a very important region because it is the economic hub of Myanmar. Projects implemented and policies laid down in Yangon can have great influence on other parts of the country with good prospects.

Economic development in this region will surely bring about development of other regions and states.

With a great tradition, Yangon lies on sea, land and air routes. Regarding the tourism industry, Yangon needs to preserve its cultural heritage and create tourist attractions which have no adverse impact on the environment.

Yangon is a place for human resource development and it is a strategic point for national security. The city is being expanded, and its economy is also being expanded.

Yangon possesses prospects for a booming economy with local and foreign investment. But we need more responsible foreign investment for Yangon to become a vitally important city.

Meanwhile, housing projects are expected to be available at an affordable price, with a long-term installment plan.

Plans are under way to turn Yangon into a clean city governed by the rule of law and an economically vibrant city, giving priority to a green economy in the city.

All in all, Yangon possesses prospects for a booming economy with local and foreign investment. But we need more responsible foreign investment for Yangon to become a vitally important city, not only for Myanmar but also for other ASEAN countries.

We need effective environmental regulations, but also for businesses to abide by regulations and do business responsibly on a daily basis, to limit the pollution in Yangon.

Yangon is expected to see development not only in major businesses but also in small and medium enterprises due to the great interest of big international companies as well as SME entrepreneurs around the world.

At this juncture, the government's support for local entrepreneurs is of great importance to be able to compete with foreign firms in every business sector. Only when the country doubles its efforts can it be able to compete with ASEAN countries and keep abreast with the international community. ■

There has been a great migration from all parts of the country to Yangon to find good jobs.

Therefore, Yangon welcomes the garment industry, which needs a large labour force, to enter the country.

Myanmar's sea outlets and cheap labour is offered to investors who want to implement industrial zones in Myanmar.

It has only one waterway, the Yangon River. Therefore, it is important to maintain the watercourse through discussions with experts, as it also plays a major role in attracting investors.

Meanwhile, housing projects are expected to be

Care and maintenance of the toddy palm tree

Win Chit
(National Literacy Award Winner)

IT has been learnt that toddy palm tree cultivators from upper Myanmar have cut down their trees indiscriminately, resulting in a significant drop in the number of trees and toddy climbers, and the falling toddy price has declined in the market.

Thus some smart businessmen have purchased the trees at a higher price. It is truly sad to see the falling trees scattered in pieces on the ground, a feeling similar to seeing a dead elephant in front of me. Being a 70-year-old man who has lived in Upper Myanmar, this sight made me feel sad to see the once stately toddy palm trees cut down on the ground.

I would like to share an effective way to conserve toddy palm trees and how to use this method in the long run. All toddy tree lovers should raise funds and organise a palm tree lover association to save the trees. Cooperation is needed to buy some mature trees on contract from the owners. As for the volunteers, they should not sell and cut down the trees recklessly, except for the old ones. I am sure that this will be effective and can help promoting the quality of life of local residents. This kind of altruistic spirit should disseminate among the people in our society.



As for the toddy palm tree lovers, they should organise volunteers and donors who can afford to purchase the trees which are in danger of extinction. Indeed, it is a noble deed and an effective way to keep toddy palm trees in existence.

It is advisable that the toddy tree lovers should place a name plate on the tree together with the donor's name so that they can appreciate their good deeds as a token of honour. It would be beneficial to the region if we can raise the funds to protect the trees.

A toddy farmer can earn more than Ks1 million per acre on average, but now toddy harvesters are in short supply in most villages because many young people in the area are moving to other countries in search of a higher and steadier income.

According to a UN report, Myanmar loses an average of some 546,000 hectares of forest land each year. The numbers of toddy palm climbers have become fewer, because they cannot earn enough from this traditional business. Meanwhile, the new generation is leaving the toddy farming business and looking for steady-income jobs in foreign countries. The increasing numbers of youths going overseas have led to the shortage of workers in these areas. Toddy palm wood is used in restaurants, tea shops and hotels and also in village houses to erect posts,

beams and bars as a substitute for other hardwood and bamboo. As a result, even 70-year-old palm trees have been fallen for this purpose.

Therefore we should find the ways and means to improve the lives of rural folk so that we can save the palm trees. Palm trees have a lifespan of 150 to 200 years, with their average height being 60 to 80 feet. The tree stumps are used to make stools and the trunks for building bridges and houses. Furthermore, toddy fronds are utilized for roofing and fencing, while their branches are used to make chairs.

In an age of modernisation, toddy palm trees are used in restaurants and tea shops to attract consumers to country cottages. They were widely used in rural areas by those who could not afford expensive wood. However, preventing the cutting of these trees is necessary to stop deforestation in Upper Myanmar and maintain the ecological balance of the area.

Major products

The toddy palm tree plays an important role in Myanmar rural life. It can give shade, be a source of drink and food, and be the material for making household utensils. It is also used in building shelters, for making jewelry, medicines, and for a variety of other purposes.

The toddy trees can provide an interesting view to the countryside in the dry zone of Myanmar, and toddy juice is used to produce jaggery (palm sugar) and traditional businesses can be able create job opportunities for local people.

Toddy Juice

Toddy is harvested from 15-year-old toddy palms. Toddy climbers use clamps to prepare the stalk. They bind the udders and chop a little of its tip to allow the sap to flow and bruise the female toddy palm's stalk that bear young fruits and make a small slice in each fruit for sap collection. Small pots are strate-



gically hung below the incision on the stalk to catch the dripping sap. Toddy juice is sweet when first harvested from the trees, but it may be fermented in the sun to make an alcoholic drink, called "toddy beer" or "toddy wine."

Jaggery

Jaggery (or toddy palm

candy) is a popular product of toddy sap. After the sap is collected; it is poured into a large pan then boiled over an open wood fire.

When the juice thickens, it is cooled, becoming more solid, and rolled by hand into round, edible pieces. The resulting candy has a smoky, sweet taste and is traditionally served with

green tea. Jaggery is an essential ingredient in recipes for Myanmar snacks and it can be used to make alcohol through distillation. The toddy business has huge potential and it's time we took our toddy palm trees to the international market. ■

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung

Public Announcement for remonstrance

THE Bamar People's Party headquartered at Room No. 005, No.9 at Shwelinban Low Cost Housing, Shwe Ingyin Road in Hlinethaya Township in Yangon, has been allowed to set up as a political party in accordance with Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law. In their application they mentioned that they will use a new set of flag and emblem as described hereunder.

In accordance 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 flag and emblem may submit a complaint along with the supporting evidence within seven days starting from the date of issuance of this announcement. — Union Election Commission



Bamar People's Party Flag.



Bamar People's Party Emblem.

Number of High School Teachers in Myanmar



■ Number of High School Teachers (Only for Basic Education Schools)
Source: Ministry of Education
Information Unit: Central Statistical Organization

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

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

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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The congregation led by Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko receives the Nine Precepts from the Members of the Sangha at the site chosen for building for Eternal Peace Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Ground consecration ceremony held for building Eternal Peace Pagoda

A GROUND consecration ceremony to build a pagoda dedicated to eternal peace in Myanmar was held in the compound of Yanaungmyin Shwe Latt Hla Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the ceremony, the congregation led by Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council Dr. Myo Aung received the Nine Precepts from the State Ovadacariya Sayadaw Abhidaja Maharathaguru Bhaddanta Kavisara and presented the religious objects for the ceremony to the

Members of the Sangha.

At the site where the pagoda would be built, Members of the Sangha recited the parittas and holy verses of the Buddha while the congregation held religious objects.

Afterwards, the laypersons buried the pots filled with the religious objects in the compound of the site chosen for the pagoda.

The Eternal Peace Pagoda will be built on the 1.3 acres of land and it will be 54 ft high when completed.

A meeting regarding the building of the pagoda was held

at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture on 8 May.

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko and members of the leading committee, working committees and sub-working committees took part in the meeting. Under the aegis of Shweparami Tawya Sayadaw Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja Dhamma Kahtika Bahujana Hitadhara Ashin Sanddardhika, the pagoda will be built with the donation of Chairman of Tatlan Developer Company U Shein Win, laypersons and wellwishers.—Myanmar News Agency■

Rainfall to increase in Taninthayi Region, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states

THERE is a likelihood of an increase in rainfall in Taninthayi Region, and Kayah, Kayin and Mon states in the next two days as the weather is cloudy over the Andaman Sea and the Southwest Bay, and partly cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal, according to the Myanmar Daily Weather Report issued by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology yesterday.

The forecast for Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Yangon and neighboring areas for today is isolated rain or thundershowers and the degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar's waters and the wave height will be some three-five feet off and along Myanmar's coasts.

The weather forecast for the next 10 days of May 2018 as stated by the weather bureau forecasts that a low-pressure area may form over the South Bay of Bengal and it may further intensify into a depression. During this period, monsoon will be moderate. The weather will be partly cloudy over North Bay and partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.—GNLM ■

Myanmar-Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrols

Following coordination between the two countries, the Myanmar Border Police and Bangladesh Border Police forces conducted coordinated patrols along the respective sides of the border.

The security forces conducted coordinated patrols from border posts 31 to 32 on 3 May, from border posts 32 to 34 and from border posts 42 to 43 on 6

May, from border posts 34 to 35 on 8 May and from border posts 43 to 44 on 9 May. Coordinated patrols along the land border were conducted 14 times in February and seven times in March and will be continued. The two forces have also planned coordinated patrols along the Naf River for four times.—Myanmar News Agency ■

JMC-U holds 16th meeting at NRPC in Yangon

FROM PAGE-1

works to be discussed and negotiated for their own organizations. To systematically implement the JMC works, all JMC levels are being formed with ethnic armed organizations, government, Tatmadaw and trusted civilian representatives.

There were some small outbreaks of conflicts between NCA signatories due to weaknesses in meeting and resolving issues among committee members, the chairman said. In some cases, there were worries of past incidents recurring again.

"Trust is to be established through transparency, taking responsibility and getting to know one another. Only then can peaceful and stable regional development works can be implemented. Peace can be implemented together with mutual trust and reliance. In the day's



The meeting of JMC-U held in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: PE ZAW**

secretariat meeting, policies set in the general meeting and works to be conducted will be discussed. To achieve real peace, committee members of all levels of JMC need to be patient and free from bias", said the Chairman.

In his greeting speech, JMC-U Vice Chairman (1) Saw Isaac Po said two-and-a-half years had passed since the NCA was signed, but all need to accept that there are still suspicions and worries in both armed organizations. That was why JMC-U

Chairman was urging to build trust in every JMC meeting.

However, levels of trust differ between regions and all need to take special care in doing things in regions where the level of trust is low. Ample time should be taken to conduct coordination well in advance. Some small acts can destroy existing trust, pushing all back towards an armed conflict situation.

This is based upon current events. All must be careful not to conduct any acts that would create obstacles on the path toward peace. Don't do anything that destroy trust and do things that strengthen the ceasefire.

Both armed organizations are defending and protecting the people according to their own beliefs and both need to conduct discussions as soon as possible for displaced persons to settle back in their places of origin

and prevent any recurrence of incidences between the armed organizations.

All were urged to resolve conflicts without using force, said the Vice Chairman (1).

The meeting started after the welcoming speech by JMC-U Vice Chairman (2) U Pyae Sone. Implementation of decisions made in the 15th meeting, discussions made at the secretariat meeting, the summary of the JMC second general meeting, the discussion on ceasefire implementation between 15th and 16th meeting and general discussions were made at the meeting.

JMC-U 16th meeting that started yesterday will continue for two more days. The Secretariat meeting of all levels of JMC was held on 7 May and the JMC second general meeting was held on 8 and 9 May in Yangon, it is learnt. ■

Media escorted to Awng Lawt, Kachin State

By Ye Kaung Nyunt

A media group is in Myitkyina in Kachin State to report on the living conditions of displaced persons who fled their homes following security operations. The media group travelled to Awng Lawt village in Tanai Township northwest of Myitkyina yesterday.

The media group arrived in an area formerly held by KIA Brigade (2) and interviewed Brig-Gen Kyaw Soe Min on the current situation in Awng Lawt.

The Brigadier-General said teams from the Red Cross and the State Government have already arrived in the area.

“People are writing on social media that the area has been bombed, military are shooting in the villages and villagers are dying, but I want to tell them that we follow the rules of engagement,” he said. “We only go after military targets and after the skirmishes we look after the villager’s houses.”

“Everyone wants to return to their homes. Please come back, we will prepare all security details. We even offered to help



The independent media group visits Awng Lawt market in Tanai. **PHOTO: PO HTAUNG**

with food and housing. If they are trapped in the forest, then there are committees in the State they can contact and we can provide assistance through them. They say they are trapped, so what can we do? Currently there is no fighting in Aung Lawt”, said Brig-Gen Soe Min.

The media group and Lt-Col Soe Htet travelled to the head-

quarters of KIA Brigade (2) and a nearby village to ascertain if there were bombings in the area.

Lt-Col Soe Htet told the media group that when security forces first arrived in the area, they saw the KIA Brigade 2 on fire, but the village nearby was relatively untouched.

“No one has yet to come to us for help saying they are

trapped here,” Lt-Col Soe Htet said..

U Guinness, Chairman of the Kachin State Red Cross Administration Committee, told the media group that they first received requests for helping trapped villagers on 17 April and received permission from the Kachin State Government to proceed.

“We received permission from the Northern State Military Command on 18 April and we set out on 20 April,” said U Guinness. “We waited in Aung Lawt from 20 to 22 April, but we didn’t see any villagers there. But we received news that some workers from Shwe Mhaw who were trapped there had heard that the Red Cross was in the area, so we set up a temporary rescue camp in Aung Lawt KBC. We transported 225 Shwe Mhaw workers and merchants to Tanai. Once we reached Tanai, we handed the workers and merchants over to the General Administration Department in the area. From there, the workers and merchants were sent back to their homes via Namti, Mogaung.”

Later in the evening, officials from the Social Welfare Department, Myanmar Red Cross, state ministers, and the State Advocate General and other officials travelled to Lawar Catholic Church in Hpakan Township to meet with 139 displaced persons residing there, who were given humanitarian support by the Myanmar Red Cross. ■

Shan State officials attend workshop for improved municipal services

As the last embers of the Htein Bin rubbish dump fire in Hline-thaya Township, Yangon Region were being extinguished, Shan State’s Development Affairs Organisations (DAOs) agreed that improving waste management is a priority and shared examples of good practices within the state.

The Asia Foundation, a nonprofit international development organisation committed to improving lives across Asia, and the Renaissance Institute, a policy institute in Myanmar that focuses on assisting the economic reform of Myanmar, have been working with DAOs to improve urban service delivery, raise municipal revenues, and improve communication between government and the public.

A workshop on 8 and 9 May organised by The Asia Foundation and the Renaissance Institute brought together 150 municipal officers and Chief Engineers, from all 77 municipalities of Shan State to learn from each other

and from international experience. The DAOs of Kalaw, Muse and Hsipaw made presentations on the challenges they face in waste management and the reforms they have taken to improve landfill management and reduce illegal garbage dumping.

DAOs are the equivalent of municipal authority outside of Yangon and Mandalay. They raise their own revenues through taxes, fees and licenses and deliver services (mainly garbage collection, roads and bridges, street lighting, sewers and drainage) to the citizens of their cities.

Tun Thet Aung, The Asia Foundation’s mapping analyst and garbage reform lead, presented the fundamentals of landfill management. This covered decisions on site selection and the critical need for effective landfill design, reducing organic content being collected, and covering the waste collected with soil on a daily basis to reduce



Municipal officials of the Shan State government attend a two-day workshop in Taunggyi on 8 and 9 May to discuss and share best practices for delivery of services such as garbage collection, roads and bridges, street lighting, sewers and drainage to the citizens of their cities. **PHOTO: COURTESY THE ASIA FOUNDATION**

methane gas emissions. All of these steps can reduce the risk of fire and address other environmental concerns, which State Director U Sai Tun Tun raised as a key challenge for municipal authorities in Shan State.

A consistent message from workshop participants was that in addition to improving their own waste collection services, municipalities needed to work better with residents to reduce illegal dumping and improve the cleanliness of cities. Better communication with residents on the consequences of illegal dumping was suggested as one way

to combat bad habits and trigger new practices of recycling and proper disposal of waste. In a workshop exercise, participants explored different ways of communicating, and defined housewives (who are generally responsible for disposing of garbage) and children as the most appropriate target groups when building an outreach campaign. Ideas for campaign communication activities included education workshops in schools and community events.

A key objective of the workshop was to “exchange and learn from each other”, a point em-

phasized by Shan Development Affairs Minister U Sai Son Hsai. Group discussions and scenario exercises on topics such as municipal revenues, mapping garbage routes and property tax created space for the participants to exchange experiences on areas for reform and improvement.

The workshop was funded through the support of the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). —GNLM ■

Lightning strikes kill dozens across Bangladesh

DHAKA — Dozens of Bangladeshis were killed in lightning strikes as pre-monsoon thunderstorms wreaked havoc across the South Asian country, an official said Thursday.

Farmers harvesting rice in open fields made up the majority of victims, Iftekharul Islam, a director at Bangladesh's disaster management department, told AFP. "In the last 24 hours, 29 people have died from lightning in 12 districts. Almost all of them are farmers," he said.

Scores of people die every year after being struck by lightning during Bangladesh's wet season, which runs from April to October, but officials say the numbers are exceptionally high this year. Islam said that more than 112 people had been killed in strikes in the first 10 days of May.

"Every day 10-12 people are dying from lightning," he explained, adding that it was instilling fear in farmers who harvest rice during this time of the year.

Authorities declared lightning a natural disaster after 82 people were killed in a single day in May 2016. Independent monitors estimated that some 349 Bangladeshis died from lightning that year. Experts say deaths are rising as Bangladesh, one of the world's poorest nations, witnesses the increased deforestation of rural areas. Farmers are known to chop down trees to free up space to grow more rice. Disaster management officials are trying to reduce the high death toll by planting five million palm trees to provide better shelter.

"We have already planted 3.8 million palm trees. But the trees take years to grow tall," said Islam.

Bangladeshi officials say a similar tree-planting programme in Thailand has yielded results. —AFP ■



Bangladesh is planting millions of palm trees to reduce the risk from lightning strikes following a similar scheme in Thailand. **PHOTO: AFP**

Invitation for Price Quotations

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Electric Power Project (EPP). The IDA No. of the financing agreement is No. 5306 MM. The Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy in its role as implementing agency of the EPP, intends to apply the portion of the proceeds of this credit towards eligible payments under the contracts for which this invitation for Quotation is issued.

MOEE now invites eligible suppliers to express the interest in supplying the following items.

Item No.	Reference No.	Description	Quantity	Units
1.	G-03	Digital Gas Meter & skid Accessories	10	Sets
2.	G-04	(a) 33kV Energy Meters	27	Nos
		(b) 33kV Current Transformer	24	Sets
3.	G-05	(a) 66kV Energy Meters	40	Nos
		(b) 66kV Current Transformer	23	Sets
4.	G-06	(a) The Universal Relay Test Set and Commissioning Tool	2	Sets
		(b) Double Stage Vacuum Transformer	2	Sets
		(c) Turbine Oil purifier	3	Sets
5.	G-07	(a) 125V Battery Bank (300Ah) & Battery Charger Complete with DC Distribution Board	5	Sets
		(b) 230V Battery Bank (300Ah) & Battery Charger Complete with DC Distribution Board	10	Sets

Eligible Suppliers having expressed interest will receive a Request for Quotation by E-mail, sealed Quotations will be submitted to the address below at the latest at the dead line (Friday, 8th June 2018, at 2 P.M Myanmar time), after which no Quotations will be accepted.

Suppliers will be selected following the shopping Method as per the "Guide for procurement of Goods, works and non-consulting services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by world Bank Borrowers dated January 2011 (revised July 2014).

Please submit sealed Quotation to; U Khin Maung Win, Managing Director, Electric Power Generation Enterprise Office No. (27), Nay Pyi Taw, for detailed information please contact to U Han Zaw, Chief Engineer, Gas Turbine section, mobile phone +959428610206 and U Aung San Win, General Manager, Procurement section, mobile phone +959457733044 or Office phone +95678104319, E-mail: procurementepge.wb@gmail.com . Please indicate your E-mail address as only electronic copies of the RFQ will be send.

Iraq readies for first election since end of IS war

BAGHDAD — Iraq is gearing up for key parliamentary elections on Saturday, some five months after declaring victory over the Islamic State group, with the dominant Shiites split, the Kurds in disarray and Sunnis sidelined.

A lull in violence ahead of the fourth such nationwide vote since Saddam Hussein was toppled in 2003 has spurred some hope for Iraqis, but surging tensions between key players Iran and the United States could rattle the country. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi—who has balanced off Washington and Tehran — is angling for a new term as he takes credit for the brutal fight-back against the jihadists and seeing off a Kurdish push for independence.

But stiff competition from within his Shiite community, the majority group that dominates Iraqi politics, should fragment the vote and spell lengthy horse-trading to form any government. Whoever emerges as premier will face the mammoth task of rebuilding a country left shattered by the battle against IS. Despite a rare period of calm, more than two and a half million people remain internally displaced and the jihadists still pose a major security threat. Over 15 blood-soaked years since the US-led invasion upended Iraqi politics there is also widespread disillusionment with the same old faces from an elite seen as mired in corruption and sectarianism.—AFP ■



Iraqi supporters of Shiite leader Moqtada Sadr attend a campaign rally in the capital Baghdad on 4 May 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

‘Now the hard part’: Malaysia awakens to new political dawn

KUALA LUMPUR—Hope for lasting change in Malaysia after the opposition’s historic election win may hinge on whether triumphant 92-year-old autocrat-turned-progressive Mahathir Mohamad has truly changed his ways and possesses the vigour and clout to heal national divisions.

The wily former authoritarian ruler, expected to become prime minister once again, proved the difference in finally enabling a rising opposition movement to break the United Malays National Organisation’s (UMNO) six-decade lock on power.

The Pakatan Harapan coalition’s victory is Malaysia’s first real government change since independence from Britain in 1957 and will fuel public aspirations for wholesale change including rights protections, press free-



Mahathir Mohamad is credited with creating a modern Malaysia, but also criticised for an authoritarian streak. **PHOTO: AFP**

dom, anti-corruption measures, changes to divisive race-based policies, and true democratic rule.

“The People’s Tsunami,” the Malay-language Sinar Harian newspaper screamed in a front-page headline.

But Malaysian politics

is known for head-spinning reversals -- not least of which was Mahathir’s own conversion to grandfatherly opposition darling -- and the future remains unclear.

“Now the hard work begins,” influential political website Malaysiakini.

com said in an editorial.

“No one should be under the illusion that a new government would be able to reverse the rot that had taken root for decades.”

“For a country that is so divided, it would take time to heal the wounds and for Malaysians to re-

build the trust for one another and for the many institutions that have failed them.”

Racial tensions

Multicultural Malaysia has been increasingly riven by political and racial tension under now-ousted leader Najib Razak, exacerbated by a multi-billion-dollar corruption scandal.

Najib is accused of presiding over the looting of sovereign wealth fund 1MDB and has responded with strident denials -- and increasing repression.

Much depends on Mahathir, whose 1981-2003 tenure as UMNO leader and premier is often credited with creating a modern Malaysia, but also tarnished by the jailing of opponents and entrenchment of the political dominance of Muslim Malays, the country’s majority group, over the

sizable Chinese and Indian minorities.

Just a few years ago, then-retired Mahathir had chastised his former protégé Najib for loosening the reins with political liberalisation moves, which Mahathir warned would lead to chaos.

Those reforms were later nullified as Najib tightened the screws over 1MDB.

Ever the opportunist, Mahathir now rails against the system he helped create and has promised reforms such as leadership term limits and scrapping an unpopular sales tax imposed by Najib. Malaysiakini called the vote a reminder that politicians are elected to serve the people “and not lord over them.”

“It would be wise for the incoming government to remember this.”—AFP■

Hong Kong’s ‘Superman’ Li Ka-shing bows out

HONG KONG— Hong Kong’s richest man Li Ka-shing on Thursday brought down the curtain on a storied career, saying he had done “the best I can”.

The 89-year old, known affectionately in the financial hub as Superman for his business acumen, stepped down as chairman of his flagship company CK Hutchison and handed the reins to his eldest son Victor after an upbeat annual general meeting.

A wartime refugee who came to Hong Kong from mainland China, Li got his start in 1950 making plastic flowers and over the years built a sprawling conglomerate that has become part of the fabric of Hong Kong life, ranging from internet services to supermarket chains.

The tycoon greeted a large crowd of reporters with open arms and

big smiles on Thursday, saying: “One person’s ability cannot bring about change. It requires everyone to work together and share a dream goal.”

Asked about his proudest achievement he said: “I’ve done the best I can.”

He told reporters: “I will miss you all... you have always been my friends.”

Li announced his retirement in mid-March when his companies released their full-year results, finally ending mounting speculation about his plans.

A sweeping revamp of his vast empire in 2015 was seen as a sign that he was paving the way for Victor to take over.

After leaving the firm Li said he plans to focus on his charity, the Li Ka Shing Foundation, to which he has already pledged one-third of his assets. The foundation funds education and health initiatives



Li Ka-shing told reporters he had done ‘the best I can’ as he brought down the curtain on a storied career that has seen him amass a fortune of more than \$33 billion. **PHOTO: AFP**

around the world.

Li has an estimated fortune of over \$33.3 billion, according to Bloomberg and Forbes.

Local media followed the tycoon closely during the day, including setting up a livestream outside his mansion and running footage of his early morning exercise routine.

“I’ll keep working, just doing different things,” a smiling Li said to reporters huddled around his car as he set

off for the day.

Li told local television network i-Cable over the phone before his last meetings with shareholders as chairman that he was confident about his son taking over, having worked with him for decades.

Analysts said while the retirement of one of Hong Kong’s most famous characters is significant, it would not impact the performance of his companies.—AFP■

CLAIM’S DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0096N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KOTA HADIAH VOY. NO. (KHAD 0096N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-5-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT 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 PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. (019N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PATHEIN STAR VOY. NO. (019N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-5-2018 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

Banned director wants to turn Africa's image on its head

CANNES (FRANCE) — Wanuri Kahiu is remarkably chipper for someone who went from national hero to being accused of corrupting Kenyan youth in little over a week.

Her film “Rafiki”, a touching love story between two middle-class Nairobi girls, is the first Kenyan film ever to be selected for the Cannes film festival.

At first, the head of the Kenyan Film Classification Board, Ezekiel Mutua, “went on air to say great things about it”, Kahiu told AFP just before its Cannes premiere Wednesday.

But a few days later the self-styled “fervent moral crusader” changed his mind, banning the bubblegum teenage romance for its “happy ending” and for showing “the resilience of youngsters involved in lesbianism”.

Daring to show the film in the conservative East African country, where LGBT people can face long prison sentences, could land the director in jail. Lesser mortals might be intimidated, but not Kahiu who is on a mission to turn Africa's image on its head.

“Rafiki”, with its skateboarding- and music-obsessed heroines, could be set almost anywhere in the world.



While the Cannes film festival has been dominated by the debate over the lack of female directors, Kahiu said Kenya was ahead of the game. **PHOTO: AFP**

“Africa is always depicted as a place with lots of pain, suffering, war and disease,” said the 37-year-old, a TED Talk regular who made a big splash at the Sundance festival in 2010 with her sci-fi short “Pumzi”, about a world without water.

‘Tame’ lesbian love

“Our ambition is to make sure the image of Africa is also fun, joyous and full of hope. ‘Afro bubblegum’ is a genre we just invented — it’s fun, fierce and frivolous work coming from Africa,” she declared, with a smile that could stop traffic.

“Unfortunately not enough people know about the way people live in modern Africa. Usually when you see Africans you see them in villages carrying water on their head. I have never carried water on my head in my life,” she laughed.

“We want to celebrate African urban pop culture,” she said.

Kahiu’s armoured-plated optimism extends to her own film, convinced that one day the ban in her homeland will be lifted.

“We have experienced films and books being banned in the past and now they are absolutely

available in Kenya. Sometimes art comes out from exile.”

Despite homosexuality being a massive taboo subject in most of Africa, Kahiu insisted she never meant to cause a scandal.

“We know we live in a conservative society,” she said, “and we had hoped for an 18 rating even if the film is quite tame.”

“The love scenes are actually cute, they are fumbling and naive, they don’t even take off their clothes.”

“The girls would not know what to do. It was about their innocence,” she said.

‘Fight for joy’

Kahiu said she did not set out to make a lesbian movie. “We just wanted to make a love story and the one that stood out the most” was the “Jumbula Tree”, a short story about the Ugandan Monica Arac de Nyeko — “just because it is such a beautiful coming-of-age story.”

“The other stories I was reading at the time were not as soft and kind,” she added.

The director even sees the positive side of the controversy kicked up by the film selected for Cannes’ Un Certain Regard section. “We’re having a conversation not only about the

LGBT community but also about freedom of expression and the right for artists to express themselves.”

Africa may have its problems, she argued, but “its history is also full of joy and fun, but we don’t hear about it. Think about the music and the way we dance. That cannot only be the result of suffering,” she said.

Kahiu believes that her job as a young African film director is “the promotion of joy. But even that got us into trouble making this film because they asked us to change the ending because they thought it was too hopeful. They said it wasn’t remorseful enough. But it’s important to fight for joy.”

While the Cannes film festival has been dominated by the debate over the lack of female directors, Kahiu said Kenya was ahead of the game. “We have as many female directors as male directors because women have always been the primary storytellers, keeping children busy as they cook and making sure that they go to sleep. Women have been the holders of stories.” But the #MeToo movement was also shaking Africa, she said. “It impacts Kenyan women in the same way that it does all over the world,” she said.—AFP ■

Penelope Cruz puts ‘torture’ of early work behind her

CANNES—Spanish Oscar winner Penelope Cruz said Wednesday that putting a firewall between acting and her private life — even when working with husband Javier Bardem — had put a stop to the “torture” of her early years in the industry.

Presenting her new film “Everybody Knows” by Iran’s Asghar Farhadi at Cannes, Cruz told reporters that she and Bardem made a point of not taking their personal life to the set, or their work home with them.

“When I was in my 20s, I thought the more I would torture myself and the more I would stay in character for months, the better the result would be,” Cruz said.

“We (she and Bardem) have very similar ways to work and maybe I did that experiment when I was younger because we both started very young.”

Cruz and Bardem, who many celebrity watchers say have claimed the place vacated by An-

gelina Jolie and Brad Pitt in the star couple firmament, met on the set of the sexy 1992 Spanish dramedy “Jamon Jamon” when she was still a teenager.

But it took working together on Woody Allen’s “Vicky Cristina Barcelona”, which premiered at Cannes in 2008, to light the romantic spark.

Cruz took home an Academy Award for her supporting role as a hot-tempered artist in the film. She and Bardem, who won the previous year for “No Country for Old Men”, are respectively the first Spanish man and woman to win an acting Oscar.

Equal pay

Bardem, now 49, publicly declared his love for Cruz, 44, at Cannes in 2010 and they married the same year on an island in the Bahamas owned by their friend, US actor Johnny Depp. They have two children together and jealously guard their privacy.

“I have a life and then I have



Spanish actress Penelope Cruz talks to the press about “Todos Lo Saben (Everybody Knows),” a film by Iranian director Asghar Farhadi at the Cannes film festival. **PHOTO: AFP**

my job and that allows me to jump many times in one day from reality to fiction — I love that beautiful dance back and forth from both dimensions,” Cruz said.

“It would not make your life better, I think, if you used certain things from your private life (on a film set) so the fact that we know each other and trust each other so much only helps.”

Cruz and Bardem have starred in nine films together, including last year’s “Loving Pablo” by Spanish director Fernando Leon de Aranoa, in which Bardem plays infamous Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar and Cruz a journalist who falls in love with him.

Cruz said that while she enjoyed working on “Everybody

Knows” with Bardem, in which they play ex-lovers thrown together decades later, “it’s not something that we plan on doing every two years”.

“No, that will be once in a while if we feel it’s right, like in this case,” she said.

Farhadi, who has frequently worked with his own wife, fellow Iranian director Parisa Bakhtavar, said the couple seemed to maintain a “healthy” distance from the industry.

“I really admired how Penelope and Javier kept fiction and reality, life and work, separate,” he said.

“They are the very symbol of a happy couple and it was a pleasure to see what deep respect they have for each other.” With the sexism and abuse debate roiling the international film industry and drawing the spotlight at Cannes this year, Cruz and Bardem were asked if they were paid equally for the film. “Yes, actually,” she said.—AFP ■

Eurovision 2018: what you need to know before watching

LISBON—From geopolitical drama to its ardent gay fan base — and questions like why can Australia enter?

Here are five facts about the Eurovision Song Contest which this year is being held in Portugal for the first time.

Guinness record

The contest was started in 1956 with the aim of uniting Europe after World War II under the original name of the “Eurovision Grand Prix”.

It has been held every year since then, making it the longest-running international TV music competition, according to Guinness World Records.

There are annual music competitions that pre-date the event, which adopted the title of the Eurovision Song Contest in 1968, but none of them are broadcast on television.

Often billed as the biggest non-sporting TV event in the world, organisers predict this week's two semi-finals and the finale in Lisbon on Saturday will have a combined global audience of around 200 million viewers.



Finland's singer Saara Aalto performs 'Monsters' during the Eurovision Song Contest 2018 in Lisbon, on 8 May 2018. PHOTO: AFP

'Big Five'... and Australia

The five biggest contributors to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), which operates Eurovision, automatically qualify for the finale along with the host nation of the event, which changes every year. The so-called “Big Five” are Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Spain.

While Australia is on the other side of the world, the contest has since the 1980s been

hugely popular in the country, especially among its large population of descendants from European countries, and in 2015 the EBU agreed to let it take part in the competition.

Australia's participation was initially set to be a one-off event but it has taken part in every subsequent edition, finishing second in 2016 when Korean-born Australian singer Dami Im represented the country.

ABBA

With the notable exception of Sweden's legendary disco group ABBA, which won Eurovision in 1974 with its hit song “Waterloo”, winning the competition has for the most part not been a guarantee of lasting international success.

ABBA, which sold more than 400 million albums, announced last month that they have reunited to record two new songs, 35 years after their last single.

Geopolitics

Conceived during the Cold War, Eurovision has always been as much about geopolitical drama as it has been about music.

Last year Ukraine did not let Russia's candidate, wheelchair-using singer Yuliya Samoilova, enter the country to take part in the competition due to a row between Kiev and Moscow over Russia's annexation of Crimea.

The contest already fuelled tensions between the two countries the year before after Ukraine's singer, Jamala, took the crown with “1944”, a song about Joseph Stalin's mass de-

portation of Crimean Tartars during World War II.

Numerous diplomatic incidents have overshadowed the contest, from Austria's boycott of the 1969 event because it was being held in dictator General Francisco Franco's Spain, to the refusal by Armenia to take part in the 2012 edition in rival neighbour Azerbaijan.

On several occasions, to avoid political tensions, participants have been called on to change or modify their songs.

Gay fans

With its high kitsch content, Eurovision has long been popular with gay fans and rainbow flags representing gay rights are a common sight at the finales alongside those of participating nations. Each year gays bars and nightclubs across Europe host viewing parties that screen the semi-finals and the final of the contest live. In the lead-up to Saturday's finale, Lisbon's oldest gay nightclub, Trumps, is holding nightly Eurovision themed parties, which have been packed with foreigners in town for the contest. —AFP

The Dude abides: 'The Big Lebowski' at 20

NEW YORK— Twenty years ago, a bathrobe-wearing stoner and his two buddies entrenched themselves in the public consciousness with a strange little movie about bowling, White Russians and a ruined rug.

Ethan and Joel Coen's idiosyncratic, hopelessly complex “The Big Lebowski” distilled the unfussy, slacker spirit of 1990s Los Angeles into a Raymond Chandleresque crime caper.

It received no Oscar recognition and pretty lukewarm reviews for a byzantine plot which the Coens themselves admitted never really mattered -- but it has proven its staying power.

Today it is nothing less than a cultural phenomenon, with its own religion, Dudeism, boasting 450,000 “ordained priests.”

Bathrobe-clad fans gather at the annual Lebowski Fest, which comes to Los Angeles in two weeks, to celebrate Jeffrey “The Dude” Lebowski, played by Jeff Bridges when he could still get away with board shorts.

“I'm so proud of being part of this movie. It's just a good movie, a really good movie,” the 68-year-old Oscar winner said at a recent screening in Hollywood,



“The Big Lebowski” stars (L-R) Julianne Moore, Jeff Bridges, and John Goodman goofing around at an August 2011 event marking the Blu-ray release of the cult movie. PHOTO: AFP

hosted by Turner Classic Movies.

The Dude, a drama-averse, unemployed slacker with a penchant for vodka with Kahlua and cream, provides the drama as he embarks on a quest to replace his beloved rug, destroyed in a twisted case of mistaken identity.

Along for the ride are John Goodman's loose-cannon Vietnam vet Walter Sobchak and Steve Buscemi's virtually mute sidekick Donny.

'Off-kilter thriller'

Despite eventually making Rolling Stone's list of “10 Best Stoner Movies of All Time,” it was neither a critical nor commercial hit on its release.

David Denby, of New York magazine, called it an “off-kilter thriller with a sad-sack hero” while for Kenneth Turan of the Los Angeles Times, the story was “disjointed, incoherent and even irritating.” —AFP ■

Diego Rivera painting sets record at auction

NEW YORK—A Diego Rivera painting set a record Wednesday night for the highest price paid at auction for a Latin American artwork, fetching \$9.76 million and taking the honor away from his partner Frida Kahlo.

The colorful painting entitled “Los Rivaless” (The Rivals) and sold by Christie's depicts two men at a traditional Mexican celebration. Until now the record was held by a Kahlo work auctioned in 2016 for \$8 million. The 1939 painting is called “Dos desnudos en el bosque (La tierra misma),” which translates as

“Two Nudes in the Forest (The Earth Itself).”

A Rivera work also holds the record for most paid ever for a Latin American piece of art, not just at auction.

That work, which the Mexican artist completed in 1928, went to a private Argentine collector, Eduardo Constantini, for \$15.7 million in 2016. It was entitled “Baile en Tehuantepec.” Baile means dance.

The website ARTnews said “The Rivals” went to an unnamed collector bidding by phone. —AFP ■



An expert restores a mural by Diego Rivera, whose painting 'The Rivals' now holds the record for the highest price paid at auction for a Latin American artwork. PHOTO: AFP



A trainer from Leeds United coaching Myanmar youths at Myanmar Football Academy in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO:MFF**

Leeds United co-hosts football clinic for kids in Yangon

WITH the joint cooperation of the Myanmar Football Federation and Leeds United Football Club, a football programme for Myanmar children titled the Leeds United Foundation Kids Football Clinic was held yesterday morning at the National Football Academy in Yangon.

The Leeds United Foundation Kids Football Clinic was attended by a total of 250 young Myanmar footballers.

The president of the Myanmar Football Federation, U Zaw Zaw, the British Ambassador, Mr. Andrew Patrick, Leeds United Football Club's Owner, Mr.

Andrea Radrizzani and several athletes attended the event.

The trainers of Leeds United Club and the team's professional football players shared their knowledge and skills along with their experiences with 250 young, enthusiastic Myanmar youths during yesterday's event.

Leeds United arrived in Myanmar on 7 May and played a friendly match with the MNL all-star team on 9 May in Yangon. They will play another friendly with the Myanmar national football team at Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Mandalay today.—Lynn Thit(Tgi) ■

Myanmar to play Laos today in semifinal of AFF U-16 Girls' Championship

The Myanmar U-16 Girls' football team will play against the team from Laos in a semifinal match of the AFF U-16 Girls' Championship 2018 at Bumi Sriwijaya Stadium in Palembang, Indonesia today.

In Group (A), Myanmar was the first place team and advanced to the semifinals with 3 wins and 1 draw out of 4 matches played, earning 10 points, which was also the point total for the Viet Nam girls' team, a second runner up.

Because Myanmar entered the semifinals with a first place ranking in group play, Myanmar can evade defending champion Thailand, which also earned a semifinal berth by finishing in first place in Group (B).

Myanmar will likely to use its star players Myat Noe Khin and Swe Mar Aung.

Myanmar's Myat Noe Khin is the current top scorer of the tourney with 8 goals. Myanmar's Swe Mar Aung is the second leading scorer with 7 goals.

Thailand's Janista Jinantuya is in third place with 5 goals scored.

A win today is essential if Myanmar wants to advance to the final that will be played on 13 May.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

England recall Cipriani for South Africa tour

LONDON — Danny Cipriani's three years in the England wilderness came to an end when

he was recalled by coach Eddie Jones on Thursday for next month's tour of South Africa.



After a three-year international exile, Danny Cipriani has been recalled to the England squad. **PHOTO:AFP**

The Wasps fly-half, regarded as one of the most talented English players of his generation, has not played for England since the build-up to the 2015 World Cup — when Stuart Lancaster was the Red Rose coach.

Cipriani's stop-start international career has been interrupted by injuries, while his occasionally colourful off-field lifestyle has not endeared him to several England coaches.

But the 30-year-old has been in fine form for Wasps this season and he now has the chance to add to a tally of 14 Tests caps, the first won back in 2008, after convincing Australian coach Jones to include him in a 34-man squad

for a three-Test series against the Springboks in June.

'Done what I asked'

"I've picked him for the first time," said Jones of Cipriani. "I've watched him closely and he's looking good. He deserves his opportunity. "He's done a few things I've asked him to do." Hurricanes captain Brad Shields, set to join Wasps, was one of seven uncapped players in Jones's squad despite being midway through the Super Rugby season. With regular skipper Dylan Hartley still recovering from concussion, Saracens centre Owen Farrell has been appointed England captain for the tour, while Danny Care, James

Haskell and Dan Cole have been rested. But Jones has selected several players who went on last summer's British and Irish Lions tour, including the Saracens quartet of Farrell, Maro Itoje, Mako Vunipola and Billy Vunipola, who is returning after being out with a broken arm.

England head to South Africa following a miserable end to the Six Nations when they lost successive matches to Scotland, France and Grand Slam champions Ireland. England had only lost one previous match under Jones since the former Wallaby and Japan boss took over following England's first-round exit at the 2015 World Cup.—AFP ■