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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Ancient cave in Kayin State boosts tourism



Tourists and local authorities flock near the entrance to Esathara Cave where a Reclining Buddha image is established for public obeisance. The natural limestone cave is seven miles from the nearest village and is located on a mountain of the same name. As ancient as the other popular caves in Kayin State, the local government is making efforts to boost tourism to Esathara Cave while making sure not to damage the natural environment. **PHOTO: NAY MYO LWIN (DISTRICT IPRD) (NEWS ON PAGE 10)**

Yanbye Island witnesses progress

CHIEF Minister of Rakhine State U Nyi Pu and his delegation yesterday visited Yanbye Island where development projects are underway.

In the morning, he inspected a 150-feet by 75-feet building of the technical school in

Kyaukpyu, which was 90 per cent complete, and a three-storey building of the education college.

At the Rammawady Hall of the town, they met Rakhine State, district and township-level officials, members of parliament, town elders, and

members of the Women Affairs Federation, as well as Maternal and Child Welfare Association.

The chief minister said he found advantages, as well as weak points in the development undertakings of the state, within the two-year period. He assured responsibility and

accountability in carrying out the tasks in the new fiscal year through corruption-free and transparent services. He said cooperative efforts will be made to win the public's trust while prioritising regional peace and stability.

At the Kyaukpyu District

Hospital, the chief minister and his delegation visited the patients and inspected the construction of an eight-unit four-storey building for the health staff and the maintenance of a salt-water sluice gate at a village.

SEE PAGE-2

Demonstrators released on bail

EIGHT protesters who staged a demonstration near the Tamway Township overpass in Yangon on 12 May were released on bail yesterday.

"We asked them to stop their demonstration, as we were worried that it might cause a traffic jam and even public anxiety. They (demonstrators) were preparing to march up to Kyauktada Township. As they refused to accept our order, we had to take action according to the principles. The police did not

hurt them. After asking them some questions, we released them on bail," explained a police officer.

The demonstrators will have to go to court in Bahan Township within 15 days as a legal lawsuit was filed against them.

Although 17 persons were involved in the case, the police detained only eight persons — six men and two women. Legal action will be taken against them and nine others.—Myint Maung Soe ■

"My Hidden City" documentary film launched



Officials introducing the short film about MraukU titled "My Hidden City" at Park Royal Hotel yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

A CEREMONY to introduce "My Hidden City" documentary film was held yesterday at Park Royal Hotel in Yangon and which was attended by Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohnn Maung.

In his speech, Union Minister said the short film was made and aimed at listing MraukU ancient city at UNESCO World Heritage Site and also expressed appreciation to anyone involving in making the film which also features the beautiful ancient city and living styles of the locals.

The tourism industry will gain momentum if the documentary is shown at the international film festivals and tourism fairs, he added.

Also in the early morning, the union minister met with the staff of Ministry of Hotels and Tourism who attended the Training of Trainers and ASEAN Community-Based Tourism Standard Dissemination Workshop (level-1) and experts at the Inya Lake Hotel in Yangon.

During the meeting, the trainees explained their studies during the training and Union Minister expressed his belief on the potential development of community-based tourism after developing Myanmar tourism market at Japan, South Korea and China in next year and creating Organic Garden. —Myanmar News Agency ■

"Bagan from the Heart" continues in Yangon

ALL inclusive participation in protecting and preserving the cultural heritage is one of the objectives of the photo exhibition — The Bagan from the Heart.

The exhibition also aims at domestically and internationally showcasing the grand ancient edifices with their uniqueness in architectural designs and magnificent artifacts along with the natural scenery, traditional festivals and social lives of the Bagan ancient cultural zone.

Hailing the efforts to put Bagan into the world heritage list of the UNESCO, the exhibition was opened at National Museum in Yangon yesterday attended by dignitaries including the Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture, diplomats, photographers, the media, social organizations, sponsors and locals.

After the speeches by the Union Minister, a Yangon Region minister and the head of UNESCO Yangon, a consultant of the global body explained the



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko delivers a speech at the Bagan photo exhibition in Yangon National Museum. **PHOTO: MNA**

method of listing in the world heritage list.

Co-sponsored by Bagan branch of the Department of Archaeology, National Museum and Library, Metta Moe Parahita group and Myanmar Photographers Association, the exhibition

continues till 15 May.

Organizers hope that the exhibition will also arouse the spirit of cherishing and valuing the ancient cultural heritage apart from reinforcing the efforts to put Bagan into world heritage list. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu visits patients at the Kyaukpyu District Hospital. **PHOTO: MNA**

Yanbye Island witnesses progress

FROM PAGE-1

On 12 May, the chief minister inspected the section-wise laying of tar, gravel and earth, and the bridges on Yanbye-Kyauknimaw road and salt-water prevention

banks in Thin Pin Chaung village.

In the afternoon, he met departmental personnel, local people, town elders and ward/village administrators at the General Administration Department.

In the evening, he inspected the construction of village-to-village roads, a 40-ft RC bridge on Yangon-Kyaukpyu road, and the retaining wall of Myinpyin radar station. —Tin Tun, Phyo Wai Lin (IPRD) ■

“ I would firstly like to address the three branches of the sovereign power of the State, who have been entrusted with power according to the Constitution, to exercise mutual respect, understanding, and trust as they collaborate for the good of the people. Additionally, I wish to urge the media sector, which serve as the ears and eyes of the public, to understand the seriousness of their duties and to hold in high regard the public sector that they serve.

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

“ No matter what kind of projects we implement, the main factor for success is collective endeavor. I am firmly convinced that we can overcome any challenge— no matter how big or difficult— if we can set aside prejudices of organizations and select groups, and work without pointing fingers and if every one of us makes concerted efforts with goodwill, wisdom, and courage.

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

Education Management Course for Headmasters concludes in Nay Pyi Taw

THE conclusion ceremony of Headmasters' Education Management Course No.(1/2018) was held at No. (6), Basic Education High School in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Tin Tun, Directors-General from Ministry of Education and other officials and the course attendees, attended the ceremony.

Firstly, the Union Minister said the education management course is the very first in that kind in Nay Pyi Taw and all the headmasters and headmistresses can share their knowledges and experiences in educational managements and educational transformational processes.

He also pointed out that qualified teachers are real in need in Myanmar to promote education and all the educational staffs should provide the



Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi delivers a speech at the conclusion ceremony of the Headmasters' Education Management Course in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

text books and school uniforms to each and every primary students on the school opening day for the convenience of study to students.

Next, Nay Pyi Taw Council

member U Tin Tun gave a talk and Director General of Basic Education Department Dr Zaw Win awarded course conclusion certificates to the attendees.

Afterward, the attendees

presented with Myanmar traditional dances.

There were a total of 92 attendees and the course ran from 23 April to 12 May.

Later a delegation led by

the Union Minister visited N0.14 Basic Education High School in Nay Pyi Taw and they gave encouragement to who join the new course of grade-2 teachers.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Cash provided for mothers and children in Kachin State

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye, together with Deputy Minister U Soe Aung and Director General for Rehabilitation Department U Win Naing Tun, attended a donation ceremony for mothers and children from an internally displaced camp in Kachin State at the Social Welfare Department, Yangon, yesterday. Maung Phone Myat Thar Htoo's parents and relatives donated Ks2.5 million to mark Maung Phone Myat Thar Htoo's first birth anniversary. The union minister gave away the certificate of honour. Later, the union minister met computer science students from the University of Computer Science, Yangon. They reported to Dr Win Myat Aye and other officials from MS-



Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye accepts a donation for displaced persons in Kachin State. **PHOTO: MNA**

WRR about website and mobile applications for the standard Myanmar sign language, which can be used by deaf children easily. It is the standard Myanmar sign language used in all deaf schools

throughout Myanmar. They can learn it via the Facebook page. The union minister and other officials attended to the needs of the students to help them achieve more success. —MNA ■

Dy Minister inspects development of Mon State

DEPUTY Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Than Htut inspected the regional development in Mon State including Ye and Kyaik Mayaw townships in 2017-2018 budget year yesterday.

Firstly, the Deputy Minister inspected Ingabo-Moebaw road (2/0 miles) construction in Kyaikhto. Next, the Deputy Minister inspected construction

of 4 roads in Ye Township.

Afterwards, the Deputy Minister also inspected low cost housing in Kyaik Mayaw Township along with road constructions, a water tank building and water delivering system. The Ministry of Border Affairs is carrying out works for the sustainable development of the ethnic region, it is learnt.—MNA ■



Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Than Htut inspects road construction in Kyaikhto. **PHOTO: MNA**

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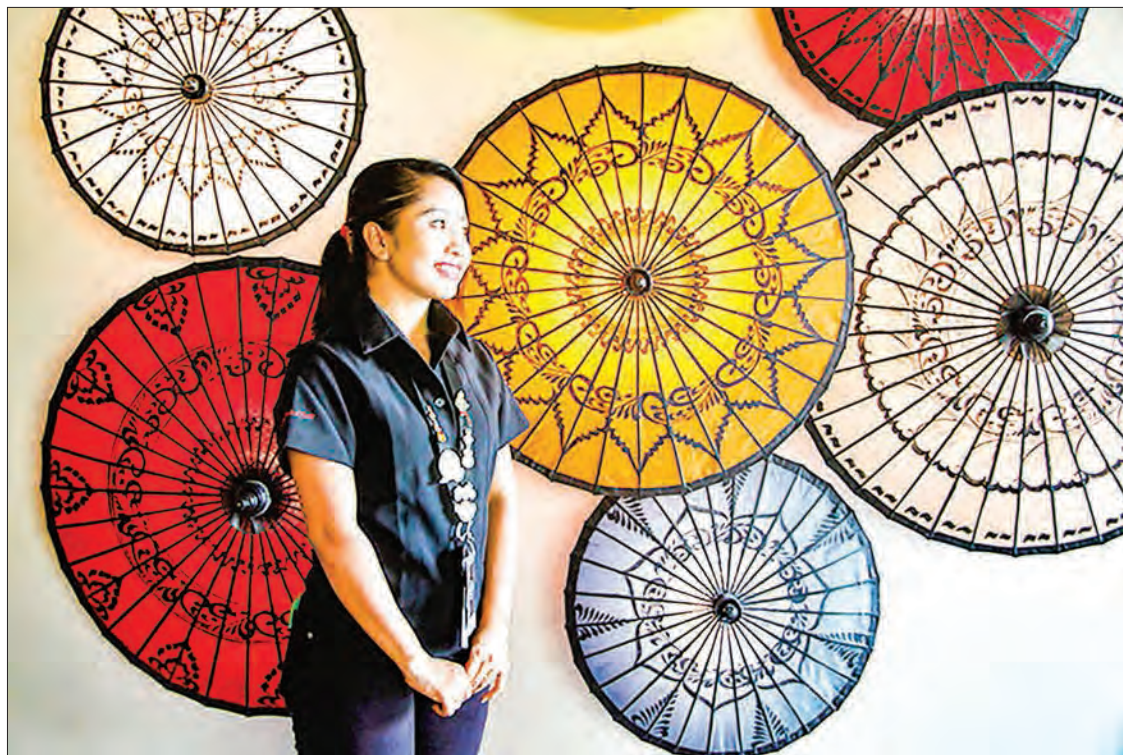
Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Trade with Italy brings in \$190 million in 11 months

THE value of Myanmar's bilateral trade value with Italy prior to a month before the end of the 2017- 2018 fiscal year reached some US\$189.7 million, including \$98.7 million in exports and \$91 million in imports, according to figures released by the commerce ministry.

Bilateral trade value with Italy was registered at some \$136.7 million in the 2016-2017 FY, \$73.1 million in the 2015-16 FY, \$113.5 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$124.69 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$27.8 million in the 2012-2013 FY and \$23.5 million in the 2011-2012 FY.

Myanmar exports Pathein parasol (traditional umbrella), hilsa, finished textiles and clothing, footwear, animal products and vegetables, while chemicals, raw materials, consumer goods, capital goods, metals, food products, and machines and



Pathein parasols (traditional umbrellas) decorate a cafe in Yangon. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

electronics are imported.

On 10 May, Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint

received a delegation led by Mr. Fabio De Cilli, Trade Commissioner of the trade promotion

section of the Italian Embassy, to boost bilateral trade. —Ko Htet ■

Capital goods imports by public sector decrease

CAPITAL goods imports by the public sector in the current six-month transitional fiscal year reached US\$16.197 million, a decline of \$11 million against the same period last year, according to official figures released by the Ministry of Commerce.

This time last year, the government imported capital goods valued at \$27.514 million.

Between 1 and 27 April

this year, the value of imported capital goods reached \$397.734 million through both public and private sectors, increasing by \$45.683 million in value compared to last April, when the country bought \$352.051 million worth of the same products.

Despite a decrease in the value of capital goods produced by the public sector, their imports by the public sector during the same peri-

od reached \$381.537 million, increasing by \$57 million compared to last year.

Over the first 27 days of this financial year, the country exported agriculture products worth \$204.5 million, animal products worth \$16.3 million, fisheries products worth \$51.1 million, minerals worth \$70.359 million, manufactured goods worth \$342.3 million and miscellaneous items worth \$86.5 million.

Myanmar continues to trade with Asian countries, ASEAN member states, island nations, Middle East countries, European and African states, and some other western countries mainly through sea routes.

It is seeking new trade opportunities and trying to boost the country's production of valued-added products to penetrate international markets.—Swe Nyein ■

Myanmar-UK bilateral trade exceeds \$320 million before end of FY 2017-18

THE value of bilateral trade between Myanmar and the United Kingdom (UK) reached US\$323.4 million before the end of the 2017-2018 fiscal year, including \$277.6 million in exports, according to the latest monthly statistics of the commerce ministry.

Between April 2017 and this February, Myanmar's imports from the UK totalled \$45.770 million.

In February alone, bilateral trade was valued at \$37.065 million.

The ministry's official figures showed that trade

between the two countries reached \$167.236 million last FY. Bilateral trade was worth \$50.374 million in the 2015-2016 FY, \$82.394 million in the 2014-2015 FY, \$73.087 million in the 2013-2014 FY, \$41.957 million in the 2012-2013 FY and \$43.743 million in the 2011-

2012 FY.

According to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, the UK invested \$211.179 million in Myanmar through four projects by the end of the 2017-2018 FY.—Khine Khant ■



Myanmar pulses are kept on display for sale in a shop at a market. PHOTO: ZAW MIN LAT

Pigeon peas price surges with India lifting import restriction

FOLLOWING the demand for 200,000 tonnes of pigeon peas from India on 11 May, the price of pigeon peas (red grams) surged from Ks385,000 to Ks481,000 on 12 May, up by Ks96,000 per tonne.

Yangon market had not fixed the pigeon peas price on 5, 8 and 9 May. Pigeon peas (red grams) RC fetched Ks375,500 on 7 May and Ks377,000 on 10 May. On 11 May, some 15 containers of pigeon peas RC were traded, while 25 containers were traded on 12 May.

Similarly, following the news that India lifted restrictions on pulses importation, the

mung bean price increased from Ks382,000 on 4 May to Ks454,000 per tonne on 5 May in the Yangon market, with 135 containers traded on this day.

India lifted its ban on importation and allowed an import quota of 150,000 tonnes of mung beans and green gram each and 200,000 tonnes of pigeon peas. The quota is applicable not only for Myanmar but also for all the bean exporting countries. Therefore, Myanmar is facing a competitive market to export pulses to India.

India is the main buyer of Myanmar's pigeon peas, mung beans and green gram. Mung

beans and green gram are exported to other countries. However, the export of pigeon peas is heavily reliant on India's market.

With pigeon peas and fresh peas piling up in the market, growers must choose other cash crops, market observers have suggested.

India's purchase of Myanmar's mung beans, pigeon peas and green gram came to a halt in May 2017, leading to chaos in Myanmar's pulses market. The market has now recovered with India lifting the restriction on pulses importation. — Maung Sae Aung ■

One permit, two endorsements approved by MIC

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) issued a joint venture investment permit and two endorsements for wholly foreign-owned enterprises under the Myanmar Investment Law, according to a meeting held by MIC last Saturday.

The joint venture approved by MIC is EC Terra Agriculture Co. Ltd. for cultivation, production and sales of agricultural commodities, including rice, corn, beans and pulses, sugarcane, oilseed crops and other cash crops, creating 40 job

opportunities for local people.

The two endorsements are for wholly foreign-owned enterprises— Best Garment (Myanmar) Co. Ltd. for manufacturing of garments on cut-make-pack basis and Coffee Concepts (Myanmar) Limited for catering and sales of Starbucks brand products, as well as the operation of Starbucks stores.

The two permits will create more than 4,100 job opportunities, according to the MIC meeting (6/2018).

MIC intends to attract

foreign direct investments worth US\$3,000 million during the transitional period from April to September for the 2018-2019 FY. The manufacturing and real estate development sectors will attract the highest FDI during the six-month interim period.

FDI worth \$5.7 billion through some 222 projects were received in the 2017-2018 FY. Singapore made the largest investments of \$2.1 billion, while China brought in \$1.39 billion. —Htet Myat ■

Vice President wants trade promotion with Nepal

VICE President U Myint Swe stressed the importance of trade promotion with Nepal on 13 May during his meeting with Mr. Bhim K Udas, Nepal's Ambassador to Myanmar.

"Bilateral trade between Myanmar and Nepal is still low. Trade between the two countries must be promoted, especially the pulses trade," said U Myint Swe.

"To bolster bilateral trade with Nepal, we will endeavour to reach an agreement through a memorandum of understanding. Myanmar will cooperate with Nepal in the education sector; also, we will try to export fisheries products to Nepal besides pulses and rice," he maintained.

"India exports pulses to Nepal and some varieties are re-exported from Myanmar. This being so, we believe the

quality of Myanmar's beans is good. Last year, Nepal bought Myanmar's good quality pulses piled up in the market at a cheap price. We would also like to boost trade with Myanmar," said Nepal's Ambassador to Myanmar.

To save transport and transaction costs between Nepal and Myanmar, the Lumbini International Airport will be opened next year. It will help enhance the tourism sector. Further, the two countries will send trade commissioners to observe the markets.

The vice president also invited Nepal to sell its products in Myanmar's market.

The value of Myanmar's bilateral trade with Nepal during the last 2017-2018 fiscal year was less than US\$8 million, according to the commerce ministry. — Nyein Nyein ■

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- Market Place by City Mart (Damasidi Road)
- Market Place by City Mart (Junction City)
- City Mart (Aung San Stadium)
- City Mart (47th street)
- City Mart (Yankin)
- City Mart (China Town)
- City Mart (Myay Ni Gone)
- City Mart (FMI)
- City Mart (Junction Square)
- City Mart (Junction Maw Tin)
- City Mart (Sule Square)
- City Mart (Star City - Thanlyin)
- City Mart (Waizayandar)
- City Mart (Hledan)
- City Mart (Myanmar Plaza)
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Housing for government services seen in Mandalay. **PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)**

Government to spend Ks8.8 billion on staff housing in Mandalay

THE Mandalay Region government will spend some Ks8.8 billion for the development of staff housing in 13 townships across the region in the 2018-2019 financial year, said U Thet Naing, director of the region Urban and Housing Development Department.

The staff housing project will be implemented in Mandalay, Madaya, Mogok, Singu, TadaU, Myittha, Singaing, Thazi, Mahlaing, Wundwin, Myingyan, Ngazun and Pyawbwe towns. It will provide 530 apartments for civil servants, and each apart-

ment will be some 650 square feet. U Thet Naing said, "The region has a total of 56,162 civil servants.

However, the government is able to construct only 3,030 apartments for them in 28 townships, as of the 2018-2019 transitional fiscal year, in the 5:39 ratio. So, the department is arranging to build more apartments this FY."

Plans are underway to develop staff housing with 248 apartments in eight townships in the region within the current six-month transitional FY. In

addition to this, the government also has a plan to implement a new affordable residential housing plan in Mekingon, Botatkhon and Thanmataw in Patheingyi Township.

The Urban and Housing Development Department spent Ks10 billion on staff housing to build 500 apartments on 33.22 acres of land near Mekingon Village in Patheingyi Township since last FY.

The project is now nearing completion.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House) ■

Literature competition to be held

THE 11th short story, article writing, poem composition, impromptu speech and poem reading competition in the Myanmar language and English to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking that falls on 26 June 2018 will be organised by the Myanmar Anti Narcotic drug Association (MANA) at Kyaukse Dhammaryone on Shwegone-dine Road in Bahan Township, Yangon Region, from 19 to 22 June.

The impromptu speech competition in the Myanmar language and English for the Basic Education High School and Middle School level will be held from 9 am to 12 noon on 19 June for contestants from West-District

Yangon Region; from 12 noon to 4 pm for contestants from Yangon Region North-District; on 20 June, from 9 am to 12 noon for contestants of Yangon Region East-District; and from 12 noon to 4 pm for contestants from South-District Yangon Region.

The poem reading competition in the Myanmar language and English for the Basic Education Primary School level will be held from 9 am to 12 noon on 21 June for contestants of Yangon Region West-District; from 12 noon to 4 pm for contestants from Yangon Region North-District; on 22 June, from 9 am to 12 noon for contestants of Yangon Region East-District; and from 12 noon to 4 pm for

contestants from South-District Yangon Region.

Students from private schools may participate in the competitions.

Manuscripts for the short story, article writing and poem composition (open level) competitions can be sent to the office of MANA at Kyun Taw Street in Kamayut Township, Yangon, no later than 7 June.

The final competition for the impromptu speech and the poem reading, as well as the prize presentation ceremony will be held from 9 am on 24 June.

For more details, interested persons can contact the central office of MANA at 01-502893.—Maung Shwe Win (Pyay)

Border security changes opening time of Lwejel gate

THE Lwejel gate in Bhamo District, between China and Myanmar, has changed the entry/exit time for trucks starting from 12 May for the purpose of security, said an official from the Lwejel border gate.

Earlier, the Lwejel gate was open round-the-clock. Now, trucks and passenger vehicles are allowed to enter/exit the gate between 6 am and 8 pm. The trading proce-

dures time is unchanged from 6 am to 6 pm every day. The Lwejel gate saw trade worth US\$21.2 million in 27 days of trade during the six-month transition period for the 2018-2019 financial year. Exports surpassed imports at the Lwejel gate.

The four other border gates between China and Myanmar are Muse, Chinshwehaw, Kanpikete and Kengtung. — Win Naing, Ko Htet

Over 840,000 acres of edible oil crops to be grown in Sagaing Region this FY

THE Sagaing Region Department of Agriculture has targeted to cultivate more than 840,000 acres of edible oil crops throughout the region within the current six-month transitional financial year starting in April.

Under the new plan, 293,588 acres of groundnut, 479,000 acres of sesame and 69,900 acres of sunflower will be grown in targeted townships in 10 districts between April and September this year.

During the rainy season, plans are underway to develop 50,686 acres of groundnut, 47,878 acres of sesame and 14,938 acres of sunflower in Sagaing District;

54,211 acres of groundnut, 112,951 acres of sesame and 24,588 acres of sunflower in Monywa District; 30,891 acres of groundnut, 221,019 acres of sesame and 22,700 acres of sunflower in Yinmabin District; 113,761 acres of groundnut, 43,967 acres of sesame and 7,620 acres of sunflower in Shwebo District; 43,139 acres of groundnut and 54 acres of sunflower in Kantbalu District; 900 acres of groundnut and 350 acres of sesame in Katha District; 98 acres of sesame in Mawlaik District; 150 acres of sesame in Khamti District and 560 acres of sesame in Naga Self-administered Zone.—Win Oo (Zeyataing) ■



Sunflower plants. **PHOTO: WIN OO (ZEYATAING)**

Interview with stakeholders in Kachin State



Injong Jartaung.



La Taung Thu.



Brig-Gen Kyaw Soe Min.



Lt-Col Soe Htet.



U Gae Nest.

By: Ye Khaung Nyunt
Photo: Poe Htaung

THE media group that travelled to Myitkyina on 9 May for three days visited the Maria Heavenly Maiden Church in Tang Hpre, Myitsone Village, the Trinity Baptist Church in Kawarka, Naungnan Village, the Nyaung Yan Camps (1, 2, 3, 4) previously held by KIA Brigade (2) and the brigade's headquarters in Awng Lawt Village.

The following are excerpts from interviews with displaced villagers, military personnel, and officials from the Myanmar Red Cross.

Injong Jartaung, 60
Tanbaungyan Village
Maria Heavenly Maiden Church

"I'm from Nan Paw Yan Village and I came here with my entire village. There are a hundred of us. We receive necessary food and a place to stay. I was a farmer in my village and I have four family members. We didn't bring anything with us. We want to live peacefully in our hometown. They are fighting each other but we are in the crossfire. We left because we were afraid of getting caught in that crossfire."

La Paing Bran Shaung, 38
(18) Mile Village
Maria Heavenly Maiden Church

"I've fled from war twice. Seven years ago I fled from



Members of the media and officials travelling to Awng Lawt Village.

Zanpaing when shootings began and now I've fled from (18) mile. I'm scared of the shootings so I left. I arrived here on 3 May with my entire family, all twelve of us including relatives. We had to circle through the forests to get here. We came by foot and I had to carry my 117 year old mother-in-law so we took longer to get here. I don't want to talk much about war. I do get affected by it. I just want to live in peace with my family. Things here are good, I just worry for my aging mother-in-law."

La Taung Tu, 80
Ingyanyan Village
Naungnan Village Trinity Baptist Church

"I come from Ingran Kaung Village near Ingyanyan Village. We fled because we were terrified of the war. I came with my son, his wife and their children. I still have family members left back in the village but I don't know if

they will flee the village or not. I've been facing war since I was 20 years old. I just wish for all fighting to end."

Brig-Gen Kyaw Soe Min
(Regional Command)

"Our fighting mainly took place in Tadar Nyi Naung Hpakant Myitkyina on 6 April. Another one took place in Lamone Village on 8 April when the other side attacked us first. Because of that we carried out area clearance operations in Tanai at the KIA Nyaung Yan Camps (1, 2, 3, 4) and Brigade (2) Headquarters. We avoided civilians and focused on military targets and avoided villages from getting damaged. Everyone who's visited the villages can see the houses were not damaged. Everyone wants to return to their homes and we can take care of their security here."

Lt-Col Soe Htet
(Regional Command)

"I'm assigned to security



Families taking temporary shelter in Trinity Baptist Church in Naung Nan Village eating dinner.

details in Awng Lawt Village. I arrived here on 1 May and the first thing we saw was the KIA Brigade (2) Headquarters burning. The other side of the village was completely untouched. Since our arrival we have not received any villagers coming to us for help saying they are trapped. Before we arrived here the church organizations contacted 200 people the first time and transported them with help from the Red Cross. But these people were not from Awng Lawt. They were workers from Shwe Maw and merchants and they were taken back to their hometowns. We've cleaned the churches in the village and left the houses in their normal state."

U Gae Nest, Chairman
Kachin State Red Cross Society

"We received news on 17 April that people were trapped in Awng Lawt Village so we asked

for permission from the state government and received it immediately. We received additional permission from the regional command on 18 April and then we arrived in Awng Lawt on 20 April. We did not see anyone when we first arrived in Awng Lawt. When the workers and merchants heard the Red Cross was here they appeared on 20 April. We contacted Awng Lawt villagers five times through the people who arrived. They thanked us for coming but they said they will discuss among themselves and didn't come out. We waited at our temporary camp in KBC Church for three days. In the end we just took the 225 workers and merchants to Tanai Administration Department and send them back to their various hometowns. The people in Awng Lawt said they were at a place three days' walk away and didn't appear anymore." ■

94 homes lost in village fire

NINETY-FOUR homes were lost in a village fire in Rakhine State on 12 May.

The fire spread to other houses when a man burnt down the bamboo wall of an empty house of Wabawgyi Village of Myebon Township at

11.30 pm on 12 May.

Villagers and village auxiliary fire brigade members collectively put down the fire and could control the situation at 1.30 am the next day. It completely died down at 5 am.

Similarly, a house caught fire when a couple burnt down their cloths after a fight at 3 pm on 12 May Pyinphyumaw village, Kyaukpyu Township.—Zin Oo, Naing Lin Kyi



Myebon Township after a careless fire. PHOTO: RAKHINE STATE FIRE SERVICES.

The Plastic Problem

BACK in April last year a floating garbage island almost 10 kilometers long was seen floating off the coast of the Gulf of Thailand. This was the second floating patch of garbage that year and it alarmed many environmentalists. However, according to Greenpeace Southeast Asia, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Plastic pollution has reached a level on par with other major environmental issues. But just a few years ago the majority of people did not believe it was a serious concern.

When a fire broke out at the 300 acres of rubbish in Htein Bin garbage dump in Hlinethayar Township on 21 April, it highlighted the importance of proper waste disposal in a city's infrastructure. The garbage dump is 10 to 15 feet high and as the burning dragged on for days the smoke and smell of charred garbage flowed into some of Yangon's townships. The fire burned for ten days and it is said that 71 people were admitted to Hlinethayar General Hospital during that time. It took the combined force of 1,800 people made up of 600 firefighters, 150 military personnel, 350 police officers, 400 YCDC personnel, and people from other relevant organizations to combat the fire.

Our main objective should be making sure the majority of the waste we produce is biodegradable and to achieve that perhaps we should use paper packaging again.

plastic has been incinerated—a process that presents its own environmental and public health problems—and only 9 per cent has been recycled. Plastic takes anywhere from hundreds to thousands of years to naturally degrade and in the process it also releases toxic elements into the environment. America alone produces 100 billion plastic bags annually and uses 500 million plastic drinking straws every day, enough to circle the world twice. Another part of the problem is that a million metric tons of plastic trash is dumped into the oceans every year which will break down into smaller fragments overtime and will pollute the sea and endanger the ocean's inhabitants. The number of wildlife mistakenly consuming plastic for food is increasing as well.

Our main objective should be making sure the majority of the waste we produce is biodegradable and to achieve that perhaps we should use paper packaging again. While this may not be easily initiated in big bustling cities like Yangon and Mandalay it can be applied to smaller towns and in rural areas. We also need to raise awareness of the global motto for plastic waster: 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.' Another thing to combat plastic waste is building power plants that use garbage as fuel. On the recent Earth Day in 22 February, the focus was on plastic pollution and finding long-term solutions to the growing global phenomenon. Thus it is necessary for Yangon Region and all of Myanmar to join in the campaign against plastic pollution. ■

Yangon City being the commercial hub and Green City it is, filled with heritage sites and poised for development, should heed this recent garbage dump fire as a wakeup call for its future. With a population of seven million people, Yangon produces around 2,500 tons of garbage daily including plastic which does not degrade easily. The Htein Bin landfill was first utilized in 2001 and prior to that the city's garbage was dumped in the landfills in Ahlone and Maugone Townships. However, during that time most of the waste produced by Yangon was easily biodegradable so that area could be cleared and developed into the townships we know today.

Plastic pollution is a global problem and all the plastic mass produced around the world since 1950 still exists in some countries and is estimated to be 8.3 billion metric tons so far. Studies say that just 12 per cent of the world's

Bank maintenance and navigable waterway for sustainable development of the Twante Canal

By Thawda Namsan

THE Twante Canal connects the seaport city of Yangon and the Delta of the Ayeyawady Region for the sake of transport and commerce and it plays a crucial role in helping in all sectors of towns and villages on either side of the Canal especially for the commercial city of Yangon. The Canal, dug during the British colonial rule, has played a vital role in commercial and military purposes. Before the construction of the Canal, a wide selection of merchandize from the Ayeyawady Delta and Upper Myanmar didn't have suitable riverine routes to get to Yangon in all weathers.

In those days, goods were sent to Yangon by two routes: 79-mile voyage started from the mouth of Twante Canal along the Toe river to Wahbalouthouk creek which could not be navigated in all weathers but only at high tide; the second route was that all watercrafts went upstream along the Toe river to Nyaundon Town and continued to travel on 84-mile voyage from Nyaungdon river along the Pun Hlaing River which could be used during the rains and not navigable during the summer.

The Construction of the Canal

The construction of the Twante Canal which connects Pathi Creek and Yangon River began in 1873 and now the Canal is a shortcut waterway between the Ayeyawady Delta

and Upper Myanmar and the commercial city of Yangon and it can be used in all weathers. In 1881, the length of 7.5 miles with 25 feet in width was added to the original length of 3.5 miles by a workforce of prisoners. The original length of 3.5 miles along the Kanaungto Creek connected Yangon and Ayeyawady Region with the Canal 300 feet in width and 9 feet in depth which was dug in 1913. A drainage channel of 3.5 miles from Letpungon customs gate to zero mile was simultaneously constructed.

With protest by the Yangon Harbour Administrative Engineers Department by giving sound reasons for getting Kanaungto Creek silted up, the width of the channel was reduced from 300 feet to 180 feet and the construction was completed in 1917. But due to erosion of the bed and the channels made the Canal to be 50 feet wider than original width.

The section of the Canal between Letpungon diversion and zero mile was paved with laterite slabs and in 1923, small dams were constructed between the sections of zero and one mile to control strong currents from the Canal. The entrance at the section of 3.5 miles was made to control the flow of currents from Kanaungto Creek, but creating a whirlpool during an ebb tide; vessels were banned for 8 hours daily during that period for safety reasons. The Canal was opened in 1917 for watercrafts with a length of 160 feet; in 1935, the Canal was widened to a



A map showing the Twante Canal. PHOTO: MMAL

length of 300 feet and deepened to allow for larger watercrafts.

Toll gates were opened to collect taxes from vessels using the Canal: one at the section of 3.5 miles at Letpungon Station and the other at 12-mile section at the edge of Twante village. The Works, Administration and Maintenance of the Canal were handed over by the Irrigation Department on 31 March, 1995.

Not to get Kanaungto Creek silted up, stone slabs were laid down layer by layer near the section of Letpundon toll gate. But the strong currents from Toe river went into the Canal unhindered, causing erosion to the bank, raising the water level in the Canal, creating a lot of whirlpools and thereby leading

to the collapse of the banks. A channel at 3.5-mile section of the Canal was stretched to a width of 100 feet and a depth of 650 feet in 2009. From that time on, all kinds of vessels have been allowed to travel in all weathers through the Canal.

Maintenance works for the Canal

Sustainable development, safe passage for all vessels and prevention of bank collapses are implemented under the incumbent government in a timely manner. Stone walls were built along the Canal to prevent bank collapses at villages near the bank and for sustainable development of the Canal. Deputy Director U Kyaw Soe from Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems explained about the tasks being taken by the Department: We have been taking actions against bank collapses and maintenance from zero-mile to 21-mile sections in 2017-2018 Financial Year. Toll gates are put in place at 3.5-mile and 21-mile sections. At the entrance of the Canal, 23 concrete piles and dam piles were put in place for maintenance and navigable waterway. The construction began in February and was expected to be completed in June. 75% of the works has already been completed; ten piles near Twante town and ten piles for the other side were concreted. Stone walls were simultaneously built near

the Aungzedi Pagoda to prevent bank collapses. " continued U Kyaw Soe.

About maintenance of waterways in Yangon Region, he continued to explain about the works being taken directly on the mouth of Yangon River, H-mawhun Creek, Ngamoeyek Creek and Bago River and demonstrations of educative techniques were also included. They were implemented in accord with allowances from the Pyidaungsu Budget and Region Budget with equal distributions for ten rivers in the Region.

Port Authority has taken over the tasks concerning with the Bayinaung Bridge. Requests by Hluttaw representatives and the people have been submitted to the Hluttaws and authorities concerned to assess for carrying out the field trips.

Maintenance of banks and navigable waterway

Water resources and improvement of River Systems Department took over tasks at three outposts along the Canal to prevent bank collapses and maintain proper waterway. These tasks for the Canal will be implemented depending on the budget allowances of 2019-2021 Financial Year. Maintenance of important sections of the Canal will be prioritized; Riverine routes have played an important role in carrying a wide selection of merchandize in a country. It

is true that Twante Canal will continue to play a crucial role in the waterway transport between the Ayeyawady and Yangon Regions as the waterway transport is the cheapest among the other means of conveyance.

Fishing trawlers and boats laden with quarries will have to abide by instructions issued by DMA so that vessels could travel safely in the Canal. Poor or housing conditions could cause bank collapses in the Canal and the people are urgently urged to protect and maintain beautification and preservation of the environment around the Canal.

The Canal was widened and deepened in 1973 by connecting Pathi Creek upstream in the west of Twante Town and Kanaungto Creek upstream in the east, making the commercial city of Yangon gain momentum in the fields of industry and commerce for trading fishery products and rice.

The Canal has played a vital role for development and prosperity of lower Myanmar towns and villages along the Canal after it was opened in 1883. Therefore bank maintenance and navigable waterway are greatly in need for beautification, protection, preservation and sustainable development of the Twante Canal. ■

Translated by Arakan Sein

Myanmar-China Friendship Association eyes enhanced Myanmar-China ties

YANGON —The Myanmar-China Friendship Association on Sunday laid down a seven-point program to be implemented in the future, with the association chairman U Sein Win Aung calling for building friendship with neighboring countries.

The program, adopted at the 5th annual meeting of the Myanmar-China Friendship Association (Central) held in Yangon, is aimed at promoting Myanmar-China relations, boosting people-to-people exchanges, and stepping up cooperation in the fields of economy, social affairs, health and education.

It also includes extension of branches of the association in regions and states in the country. According to the meeting, establishment of branches of the association have been extended to Mandalay, Lashio, Mawlamyine and Taunggyi in addition to the Yangon central branch.

Expressing delight over the annual meeting, Counselor of the Chinese Embassy Li Xiaoyan expressed the willingness to continue to cooperate with the association to jointly enhance the China-Myanmar Paukphaw (fraternal) friendship.

The Myanmar-China Friendship Association (Central) was established on May 30, 2013, with the aim of enhancing friendship between peoples of the two countries and carrying out socio-economic undertakings that benefit both peoples. —Xinhua ■

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

ONE aspect of global media that strikes me strongly emanating from various media outlets across the planet is the overwhelming coverage on negative politics, terrorism, violence, death, destruction and hopelessness. I sincerely believe that media also carry a broad responsibility of building a holistic image of a nation or a region. A newspaper builds a nation and communicates to the world the health of the nation. Will any foreign tourist or foreign direct investment reach a country if that is based on the negative criticism terminating from different media sources? This has long term damaging impact on the minds of our younger generation too who is growing up believing that there is nothing for them other than violence. If media becomes so overwhelmingly negative in its holistic view it will have detrimental and negative impact on the society at large too. A blood stained body lying on the ground in a pool of blood with bomb spitted body parts scattered everywhere can certainly win a Pulitzer award; but can never build a nation. I sincerely believe that there are other positive things happening in a nation that does not get adequate coverage. Responsible and balanced journalist is also necessary for a nation to make progress.

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu
Apt 6-409, 43 Street South,
Lethbridge AB Canada T1J 4B3

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



A boat travelling in the Twante Canal. PHOTO: MMAL



The Kayin State Chief Minister and entourage walk along the natural pathway in Esathara limestone cave. **PHOTO: NAY MYO LWIN (DISTRICT IPRD)**



The Kayin State Chief Minister and other officials pay respect to local monks near the cave's entrance. **PHOTO: NAY MYO LWIN (DISTRICT IPRD)**

Ancient cave in Kayin State boosts tourism

KAYIN State is popular for its natural limestone caves and waterfalls. Some of the famous limestone caves are Kawgun Cave, Yathaypyan Cave, Sadan Cave, and the Bayin Nyi Naung Caves. Another cave that is drawing tourists is the Esathara Cave near Naungpalain Village.

To improve access to the cave for tourists and build better roads, Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nan Khin Htwe Myint and state ministers visited the area yesterday morning.

The Esathara Cave is

located on some 90 acres of the Esathara mountain near Nanpalain Village. It is accessible by travelling on Hpa-an-Hlaingbwe road and turning into the Mebaung Village-Naungpalain Village road. Some seven miles into the road, there is a checkpoint that diverts into a dirt path and into the cave entrance. A reclining Buddha image can be seen near the entrance, with the cave being some 1,000 feet deep.

The cave is filled with numerous natural beauties, and at the end of the passage is a small opening 10 feet above the cave floor

that can be accessed with a bamboo ladder.

Hpa-an is a central tourism attraction in Kayin State that houses natural caverns, scenes of the state's traditions and culture, waterfalls, hot springs and other tourist destinations, for which Hpa-an received the ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Award 2018.

The chief minister and other state ministers will survey the area to ensure no modifications or changes are carried out that will damage the natural environment of the area. —Nay Myo Lwin (District IPRD)



The cave's pathway rises up in ascending steps. **PHOTO: NAY MYO LWIN (DISTRICT IPRD)**



The cave is lit by light bulbs installed into the ceiling. **PHOTO: NAY MYO LWIN (DISTRICT IPRD)**



Limestone stalagmites and columns dot the cave's pathway. **PHOTO: NAY MYO LWIN (DISTRICT IPRD)**



Limestone stalactites hanging from the cave's ceiling. **PHOTO: NAY MYO LWIN (DISTRICT IPRD)**

More than 80 houses built for ethnic people in Rakhine

WITH the donations from other parts of the country, 82 homes are being built for the displaced ethnic people of Rakhine State in the west of the country. Mingyi village in

Maungtau Township, which will host the displaced people, will get 45 homes being built under the donations of the people and the government of Sagaing Region in the

northern part of the country and 37 homes, a school and a monastery being built with the funds provided by the people and the government of Kayin State in the southern part.

Yesterday, two cabinet members of the Kayin State government — Minister for Environmental Conservation, Forestry, Mineral Resources and Transport U

Saw Pyi Tha and Minister for Bamar Ethnic Affairs U Teza Htut Hlaing Htwe and party visited the village.

Over 130 workers are constructing the buildings

in two shifts daily.

The project started in November 2017 and will be completed this month end after the arrival of monsoon. — Zin Oo, Naing Lin Kyi ■

Iran FM hopeful of forging 'clear future' for nuclear deal on diplomatic tour

BELJING — Iran's foreign minister said Sunday he was hopeful of forging a "clear future design" for the nuclear deal facing collapse after Washington's withdrawal, at the start of a diplomatic tour aimed at rescuing the agreement.

"We hope that with this visit to China and other countries we will be able to construct a clear future design for the comprehensive agreement," Mohammad Javad Zarif told reporters after talks in Beijing with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi.

Zarif will later fly to Moscow and Brussels to consult the remaining signatories to the 2015 agreement denounced by US President Donald Trump.

Washington's decision to withdraw from the deal and reimpose sanctions angered its European allies as well as China and Russia.

China was one of the six powers — with the United States, Russia, France, the UK and Germany — that signed the historic pact, which saw sanctions lifted in return for the commitment by Tehran not to acquire nuclear weapons.

As he arrived in Beijing, Zarif said Tehran was "ready for all option(s)", according to the semi-official ISNA news agency.

"If the nuclear deal is to continue, the interests of the people of Iran must be assured," he added. After their meeting, Zarif and Wang hailed the "comprehensive strategic partnership" between their countries, with the Chinese



Zarif will later fly to Moscow and Brussels to consult the remaining signatories to the 2015 agreement. **PHOTO: AFP**

minister saying: "I hope and believe that these visits to multiple countries will... help protect Iran's legitimate national interests and peace and stability in the region."

Tehran's chief diplomat embarked on the tour as regional tensions spiked just days after unprecedented Israeli strikes in Syria which a monitor said killed at least 11 Iranian fighters, triggering fears of a broader conflict between the two arch-enemies.

'Extremist administration'

Before leaving, Zarif published a government statement on his Twitter page, slamming Trump's "extremist administration" for abandoning "an accord recognised as a victory of diplomacy by the international community".

It reiterated that Iran was preparing to resume "industrial scale" uranium enrichment "without any restrictions" unless

Europe provided solid guarantees it could maintain trade ties despite renewed US sanctions.

Trump hit back Saturday evening, tweeting that the accord had failed to contain Iran's militarism.

"Iran's Military Budget is up more than 40 per cent since the Obama negotiated Nuclear Deal was reached... just another indicator that it was all a big lie," he wrote.

Zarif's delicate diplomatic mission was complicated by the reports of clashes between Iranian and Israeli forces in Syria on Thursday. The Syrian Observatory of Human Rights said Saturday that 11 Iranians were among the pro-regime fighters killed in strikes by Israel, which has vowed to prevent Iran from gaining a military foothold in neighbouring Syria.

Tehran, which has sought to

avoid an escalation in a regional conflict that could alienate its European partners, has not commented on whether its forces were hit.

Israel and its allies have blamed Iran's Revolutionary Guards for initiating Thursday's exchange by launching missiles into the occupied Golan Heights.

Iran denies the claims, saying the Israeli strikes were launched on "invented pretexts".

Allies fume at Trump

Meanwhile, European diplomats in Tehran fumed that Trump's decision to withdraw from the deal could undermine years of patient work to restore commercial and diplomatic ties with the Islamic Republic.

"Since the signing of the JCPOA (nuclear deal), we have gone from an atmosphere like a gold rush, to one of utter depression," said a Western trade diplomat on condition of anonymity.

"We are waiting now for how the decision-makers in the European Union will react. If the EU leans towards accommodating the US, all the progress we have made since 2015 will be lost."

Iranian hardliners — who have long opposed President Hassan Rouhani's moves to improve ties with the West — are already mobilising against the efforts to save the nuclear deal.

Mohammad Ali Jafari, head of the Revolutionary Guards, said the country could not rely on the West. "We hope recent events will lead us not to trust in the West

and even Europeans," he said Sunday, according to the conservative-linked Fars news agency.

"The Europeans have repeated on several occasions that they will not be able to resist US sanctions."

He added if the European powers were unable to make guarantees, "we must choose the path of self-sufficiency and nuclear industry with our own capabilities".

The sentiment was echoed on the streets. "Officials shouldn't trust France and Britain. They will never abandon the US for us," said housewife Poormoslem at a protest against Trump on Friday.

A photo on the official Instagram site of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei showed him reading a Farsi translation of Michael Wolff's blistering account of the Trump White House, "Fire and Fury", quickly picking up more than 100,000 likes.

Khamenei said last week he was highly doubtful that Europe would provide the "real guarantees" needed for Iran to stay in the nuclear deal.

But analysts said Iran was determined to maintain the moral high ground in the coming weeks.

"For the first time, Iran has the chance to show the world they are not the rogue nation they are always presented as, that they negotiated in good faith and keep to their commitments," said Karim Emile Bitar of the Institute for International and Strategic Studies in Paris. —AFP ■

Dutch firm ASML perfecting 'microchip shrink' for tech giants

VELDHOVEN (NETHERLANDS) — They call it "the shrink" — it's the challenge of how to pack more circuits onto

the microchips which power everything from our phones to our computers, even our coffee machines.



A lens used in the manufacturing of semiconductors at Dutch company ASML, whose latest systems project blueprints of circuitry onto silicon wafers. **PHOTO: AFP**

And pushing the boundaries of this technology is Dutch company ASML, which since its foundation in 1984 has quietly become a world leader in the semiconductor business.

"There is more power in your smartphone today than was used to put man on the moon," says ASML's chief operating officer Frederic Schneider-Maunoury, animatedly waving his mobile phone in the air.

When you open an app on your phone, the chain allowing you to book a flight, message a friend or check out who's hot in your neighbourhood arcs all the way back most likely to ASML.

Headquartered in Veld-

hoven, near the Belgian border, it builds sophisticated lithography machines to enable the world's top chip makers — Intel, Samsung and Apple supplier Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing (TSMC) — to produce the smallest, most powerful, most cost-effective microprocessors on the planet. Its newest machines use highly-focused extreme ultra-violet (EUV) light to imprint designs on the chips, and are at the cutting-edge of what is scientifically and technologically possible in the art of miniaturisation.

'Phones are not for calling'

Last year after two decades of research and development and billions of euros, ASML shipped

its first 12 EUV machines to clients. Each costs about 120 million euros (\$145 million).

This year it has projected sales of 20 machines — by 2020, it hopes to be selling 35 to 40 a year.

It is ironic that these machines, which produce chips of infinitesimally small dimensions, are the size of a bus. Three Boeing 747 aircraft are needed to transport one machine to a client.

Long seen as a bellwether of the tech industry, the company is listed on both the Amsterdam bourse, the AEX, and the Nasdaq in New York. Last year it announced profits had almost doubled to 2.12 billion euros on record sales of 9.05 billion euros. —AFP ■

North Korea to destroy nuclear site ahead of US summit: KCNA

SEOUL — North Korea will destroy its nuclear test site later this month, ahead of a summit with the United States, it said Saturday, pledging to blow up its tunnels in front of invited foreign media.

US President Donald Trump praised the North's decision to dismantle the Punggye-ri test site in a ceremony scheduled between 23-25 May, the latest step in leader Kim Jong Un's charm offensive.

"Thank you, a very smart and gracious gesture!" Trump tweeted.

Dialogue brokered by Seoul has seen US-North Korea relations go from trading personal insults and threats of war last year to a summit between Kim and Trump due in Singapore on 12 June.

But sceptics warn that Pyongyang has yet to make any public commitment to give up its arsenal, which includes missiles



Kim Jong Un has declared the development of the North's nuclear force complete and that it had no further need for the Punggye-ri test site. PHOTO: AFP

capable of reaching the United States. Washington is seeking the "complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation" of the North and stresses that verification will be key. Punggye-ri, in the northeast of the country, has hosted all six of the North's nuclear tests, the

latest and by far the most powerful in September last year, which Pyongyang said was an H-bomb.

Kim has declared the development of the North's nuclear force complete and that it had no further need for the site. The latest measures will see the tunnels of the

test site blown up and their entrances completely blocked, Pyongyang's foreign ministry said, according to the official KCNA news agency.

All observation facilities and research institutes would be removed, along with guards, it said, "and the surrounding area

of the test ground be completely closed". Reporters from China, Russia, the United States, Britain and South Korea would be allowed to cover the event on site to show it "in a transparent manner". Limits on foreign journalists were due to space constraints, it said, as the site was in an "uninhabited deep mountain area". South Korea welcomed the announcement, which signalled the North's willingness to carry out its pledges "not just in words but in action".

"We hope the sound of the dynamite blowing up the tunnels at Punggye-ri will be the first salute in our journey towards a nuclear-free Korean peninsula," the South's presidential spokesman said.

Analysts said the move was positive but limited in its scope. It was "not bad, but a cost-free signal", tweeted MIT political science profes-

sor Vipin Narang. Given the stage it had already reached, Pyongyang "may feel like they don't need to test anything for a while", he said.

Jeffrey Lewis, of the Middlebury Institute for International Studies, expected that the North "will sanitise the site before letting anyone see it".

'Fire and fury'

Saturday's announcement is the latest move in a rapid sequence of events on the Korean peninsula triggered by the Winter Olympics in the South. Tensions had been mounting for years as Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes saw it subjected to multiple rounds of increasingly strict sanctions by the UN Security Council, the US, EU, South Korea and others, and Trump last year threatened the North with "fire and fury".—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 the National Community Driven Development Project (NCDDP). The IDA N° of the financing agreement is N° H814MM. The Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, in its role as implementing agency of the NCDDP, intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this financing towards eligible payments under the Purchase Order/Contract for the following packages. DRD now invites eligible suppliers to express their interest in supplying the following item:

Reference Number: G 72 Supply of Water Quality Testing Kits including end user Training for 54 Townships

Reference No.	Lot No	Description	Quantity (Number)
G 72	1	Supply of Water Quality Testing Kits including end user Training for 54 Townships	54 kits

Expressions of Interest on Quotation must be submitted in a written form to the email address below and clearly indicate the reference number above. The invitation to quote will be distribute on the needs of DRD. Eligible suppliers having expressed interest will receive an INVITATION TO QUOTE (ITQ). Sealed Quotations will be submitted to the address below at the latest **at the dead line of Wednesday 13 June 2018 at 10am Myanmar time**, after which no Quotations will be accepted.

The goods will be contracted in lot-by-lot basis. Suppliers will be selected following the Shopping Method as per the "Guidelines for Procurement of Goods, Works and non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers" dated January 2011.

Please submit your Expression of Interest for receiving the Invitation to Quote (ITQ) to: U Kyaw Soe, Deputy Director General, Department of Rural Development, Office No.(14), Nay Pyi Taw. For detailed information please contact U Kyaw Swa Aung, Director, Procurement and Logistic Section, Mobile phone 0943434333 or office phone 067409071/ Email: unioncddprocurement@gmail.com. Please indicate your e-mail address as only electronic copies of the ITQ will be send as well as introduce your company name and contact number to communicate with you. For more information on the NCDD Project please also visit Website: www.cdd.drdmyanmar.org.

Paris knife attacker 'born in Chechnya'

PARIS — A knifeman who killed a man and wounded four other people in a suspected terror attack in central Paris was born in Chechnya and his parents have been taken into custody, a judicial source said on Sunday.

The young Frenchman, born in 1997 in the southern Russian republic according to the source, was shot dead by police after carrying out the assault on Saturday evening near the city's main opera house.

"He had no judicial record," the judicial source told AFP.

"(The attacker) is French, born in Chechnya in 1997. His father and mother were placed in custody Sunday morning."

Witnesses said they heard the attacker shout "Allahu akbar" (God is great) as Parisians fled into restaurants and bars after realising another possible terror attack was underway in a country already reeling from a string of jihadist assaults

that have killed more than 245 people in the last three years.

"I was taking orders and I saw a young woman trying to get into the restaurant in panic," Jonathan, a waiter at a Korean restaurant, told AFP.

The woman was bleeding and a young man fended off the attacker who then ran away, he said.

"The attacker entered a shopping street, I saw him with a knife in his hand," he said. "He looked crazy."—AFP ■

MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER

1. MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WILL SELL TEAK & HARDWOOD ROUND LOGS AND SAWN TIMBERS BY OPEN TENDERS IN US DOLLARS. PARTICULARS OF THE OPEN TENDER SALES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| (a) DATE & TIME | - (24-5-2018) (09:00)A.M
YANGON & EX-SITE HARDWOOD LOG ONLY
(25-5-2018)(09:00)A.M
YANGON & EX-SITE TEAK/HARDWOOD(LOG AND CONVERSION)
(28-5-2018) (12:00)Noon
YANGON TEAK LOG ONLY |
| (b) COMMODITIES & VOLUME | - TEAK LOGS ABOUT (1655) TONS
- TEAK CONVERSION ABOUT(545)TONS
HARDWOOD LOGS (2017-2018 EXTRACTION YEAR)
PADAUK, PYINKADO , IN/KANYIN , THINWIN ,
THATYAR, INGYIN, THADI, THITSI, ITHITMAGYI
ABOUT(11239)TONS |
| (c) PLACE | - TAW WIN HALL, GYOGONE, INSEIN TOWNSHIP, YANGON. |
2. FOR FURTHER DETAILED INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE HEAD OFFICE AND ALSO VISIT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WEB-SITE (www.myanmar-timber.com.mm).
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OPEN TENDER COMMITTEE
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

Indonesia church attacks kill at least 11, dozens wounded

SURABAYA (INDONESIA) — A series of blasts, including at least one suicide bombing, struck churches in Indonesia on Sunday, killing at least 11 people and wounding dozens in the deadliest attack for years in the world's biggest Muslim-majority country. The nation has been on high alert following attacks by homegrown militants, including some claimed by the Islamic State group, as it grapples with rising intolerance towards religious minorities.

No one has yet claimed responsibility for the bombings during Sunday services in Indonesia's second-biggest city Surabaya.

East Java police spokesman Frans Barung Mangera confirmed the deaths of 11 people with 41 injured after three churches were hit by apparently coordinated attacks around

7:30 am (0030 GMT).

TV footage appeared to show a person on a motorcycle driving into the grounds of one church before a bomb went off seconds later.

Televised eyewitness reports suggested that one suicide bomber was a veiled woman with a couple of children in tow.

Police have not confirmed details about the suspects and it was not clear what happened to the children after the blast.

Other images showed a vehicle engulfed in flames and plumes of thick black smoke as a body lay outside the gate of Santa Maria Catholic church, with motorcycles toppled over amid the debris.

"I was frightened... many people were screaming," 23-year-old witness Roman told AFP after the blast at Santa Maria.



Police with dogs examine a site following attacks outside the Surabaya Centre Pentecostal Church. **PHOTO: AFP**

Police experts disarmed two unexploded bombs at the Gereja Pantekosta Pusat Surabaya (Surabaya Centre Pentecostal Church), which was also hit by a live blast.

Also targeted was the Kristen Indonesia Diponegoro Church.

Shootout kills four

The attacks came just days after five members of Indonesia's elite anti-terrorism squad and a prisoner were killed in clashes that saw Islamist inmates take a guard hostage at a high-security jail on the outskirts of Jakarta.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for that incident although police denied its involvement.

Police on Sunday said four suspected members of the radical group Jamaah Anshar Daulah had been killed in a shootout during

raids linked to the prison riot, but would not comment on whether the group was connected to Sunday's bombings. Nearly 90 per cent of Indonesia's 260 million people are Muslim, but there are significant numbers of Christians, Hindus and Buddhists.

Concerns about sectarian intolerance have been on the rise, with churches targeted in the past.

Police shot and wounded an IS-inspired radical who attacked a church congregation outside Indonesia's cultural capital Yogyakarta with a sword during a Sunday mass in February. Four people were injured. In 2000 bombs disguised as Christmas gifts delivered to churches and clergymen killed 19 people on Christmas Eve and injured scores more across the country.—AFP ■



Children kiss their mother during celebrations for Mother's Day in Athens, Greece, on 13 May 2018. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Greece celebrates Mother's Day with wishes for better future

ATHENS — Greece marked Mother's Day on Sunday with a series of events held by municipalities to honor motherhood.

Officials and ordinary citizens sent wishes for a better future for mothers and their children in the country which is set to exit an acute eight-year debt crisis this summer.

"This day reminds us of the role of the Mother who brings life and keeps family united... We should

never forget that thanks to strong family ties we avoided the collapse of the social fabric during these difficult years," Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos said in his e-mailed message for the day.

The celebration of motherhood in Greece has roots in antiquity. Ancient Greeks held spring festivals to honor Rhea, the goddess of fertility and "mother of Olympian Gods", according to an-

cient Greek mythology.

Mothers who took their children in a central Athens park on Sunday to enjoy music and dance performances and take part in various workshops noted that parenthood, in particular during the years of financial hardship, is not easy. Greek women have fewer children than the average for the EU, according to figures for the year 2016 released by Eurostat this spring.

The average for Greek women is 1.38 children each, while the EU average fertility rate is 1.6 children. Birthrates in Greece have been reduced by 10 per cent in the past decade, according to the official statistics. As social benefits to support motherhood have been slashed and couples faced pay cuts, tax hikes, unemployment and uncertainty, fertility rates also declined.—Xinhua ■

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Israel wins Eurovision with #MeToo inspired song

LISBON — Israel won the Eurovision Song Contest in Lisbon early Sunday after singer Netta Barzilai beat 25 other contestants with her uptempo song “Toy” whose lyrics were inspired by the #MeToo movement.

The winning track, which contained refrains such as “I am not your toy, you stupid boy”, summed up the concerns of many women who have adopted the growing global movement against sexual harassment.

The 25-year-old, who wore a multicoloured kimono, accompanied her winning performance with trills, clucking sounds and chicken-like dance moves in an eye-catching and bizarre performance that is often typical of the Eurovision contest.

“I am so happy. Thank you so much. Thank you for supporting diversity,” she as she took the stage to perform her song again after her win was announced.

“People chose different, people chose refreshing.”

Barzilai secured 529 points, beating stiff competition from Cyprus’ Eleni Foureira and her fiery song “Fuego” which got 436 points.

She received the Eurovision trophy from the last year’s winner, Portugal’s Salvador Sobral, who had called her song “horrible” in an interview published in Portuguese daily Publico on Wednesday.

“I felt he respected me and I send only love to him,” Barzilai said when asked at a press conference what it was like to receive the award from Sobral.

Shortly after her victory Barzilai managed to break the glass trophy she had been awarded — but organisers gave her a re-

placement at the post-concert press conference.

Stage invasion

The annual musical extravaganza has long been known for its ludicrous costumes, glitz and high-tech stage effects.

Highlights from this year’s contest which was hosted by Portugal for the first time included a staircase that was set ablaze and a giant projection dress that came to life with colourful animations.

British singer SuRie’s performance was interrupted by a man who jumped on stage and snatched her microphone as she performed her entry “Storm”.

She calmly turned to one side and clapped while the man was escorted away before quickly resuming singing after being handed another microphone.

The man is in police custody, the European Broadcast Union, which stages Eurovision, said in a statement.

SuRie and her team were offered the chance to sing again but opted not to because they were “extremely proud” of her performance, it added. She finished in 24th place.

Israel has won the contest in 1978, 1979 and 1998.

Ariel Lopstein, a Jewish Puerto Rican who lives in Madrid who was at the final, said Barzilai’s victory was a way of celebrating the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the state of Israel.

“I am really excited, really happy,” the 43-year-old, who wore a blue and white Israeli flag around his back, told AFP.

‘Best ambassador’

Barzilai’s victory sparked



Netta Barzilai track “Toy” tapped into the #MeToo movement zeitgeist. PHOTO: AFP

celebration in Israel, which has won the contest three other times, in 1978, 1979 and 1998.

Hundreds of fans danced in front of Tel Aviv’s city hall. Some threw themselves fully clothes into the shallow water of the building’s esplanade.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu congratulated Barzilai by telephone, telling her she was “the best ambassador of Israel. We love you.”

Israel will now host the contest next year. Eurovision was first held in 1956 with the aim of uniting Europe after World War II. Today it has an estimated global audience of around 200 million people — more than the Super Bowl in the United States — and

has served as a global launching pad for the likes of ABBA and Celine Dion.

“It’s just harmless fun, it is just a really good atmosphere,” said Lee Torrance, a 43-year-old from Worcestershire in the United Kingdom who wore a vest and bowtie with the Union Jack pattern to the final.

China ban

Although the contest is supposed to be nonpolitical, this year’s Eurovision, like many others before it, was no stranger to controversy.

The European Broadcast Union barred China’s Mango TV from airing Saturday’s final after it edited out a romantic dance

sequence by two men from Ireland’s entry during the contest’s first semi-final.

Mango TV also blurred out rainbow flags in the audience.

After two semi-finals held this week, 20 countries moved to Saturday’s final while Britain, Italy, Spain, France and Germany got free passes as they are the biggest contributors to the European Broadcasting Union. Portugal automatically qualified because it was the host.

Barzilai said she would celebrate her win with her fans who had come to Lisbon from Israel to support her at the contest.

“There is nothing like an Israeli party. You will find out next year,” she added. — AFP ■

‘Star Wars’ as big as The Beatles, says Ron Howard

LOS ANGELES — Oscar-winning filmmaker Ron Howard said Saturday directing a movie in the “Star Wars” universe was as daunting as making his Beatles documentary thanks to the intense fan love.

Howard, 64, who made the acclaimed “The Beatles: Eight Days a Week” (2016) about the peak years of the Fab Four, told a news conference in southern California he felt just as much pressure on “Solo: A Star Wars Story.”

“The level of anticipation is unlike anything that I’ve done.

You fall into it and it’s amazing. It was a little bit like the Beatles documentary that I took on,” said Howard, who won directing and producing Oscars for “A Beautiful Mind” (2002).

“I could tell from the moment it was announced, ‘Ron, don’t (mess) this up.’ So I immediately felt the same thing with this. The fans care, and they should care.”

“Solo,” which gets its US release on 25 May, charts the adventure-filled past of smuggler Han Solo — made famous in four “Star Wars” movies by Harrison Ford — before he was the galaxy’s

most adored scoundrel.

The second of three planned spin-offs from Disney-owned Lucasfilm, it follows “Rogue One: A Star Wars Story,” the second highest grossing movie worldwide in 2016.

The latest episode sees Han meet his mighty future co-pilot Chewbacca and encounter the notorious gambler Lando Calrissian, in a journey that sets the course of one of the Star Wars saga’s most unlikely heroes.

“It’s really wild. It’s really exciting and it’s bigger than you can wrap your head around. Par-

ticularly being in the Millennium Falcon, is very cool,” said Alden Ehrenreich, 28, who stars as the titular hero.

‘Life-changer’

“You get in and you can’t believe you’re in it and it’s so surreal. And then, a couple months into shooting, you’re inside of it, you’re flying it, you know where the buttons are and you’re like, ‘Okay, this feels like my ship now.’”

Donald Glover, known to cool kids the world over as US rapper Childish Gambino, was the only name on Lucasfilm’s list to

play Lando. One of the world’s hottest rising stars, Glover is an award-winning writer, director, musician, stand-up comedian and actor, known for his television work on “Community,” “Atlanta” and “30 Rock.”

“I love that there are rich people and poor people in this movie,” said Glover, who racked up a record-breaking 90 million YouTube views this week with his new single “This is America.”

“You get to see why Han is complicated. That’s a rough world out there and I really love that it’s not simple.” — AFP ■

First female Bishop of London installed

LONDON — Sarah Mullally was installed as the first female Bishop of London on Saturday, becoming the third most senior cleric in the Church of England.

Mullally was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at St. Paul's Cathedral on International Nurses Day — Florence Nightingale's birthday — echoing the new bishop's former career as a nurse.

She followed the tradition of knocking three times on the cathedral's Great West Door with her pastoral staff.

She is now the state church's third most senior cleric, after the archbishops of Canterbury and York.

In her sermon, she spoke of the challenges facing London, particularly escalating knife crime, and referenced historical

sexual abuse within the church.

"We need to speak up for the whole of London, to work to challenge the violence and the crime that have led mothers to clean their own children's blood from our pavements," she said.

"Could there be a starker image or a more urgent wake-up call for all who love this city, who believe it can have an even better future?"

The Church of England's general synod gave final approval to a historic reform allowing female bishops in 2014 after years of bitter wrangling between factions who opposed and supported the move. The CofE consecrated its first female bishop in January 2015. Women have been able to be ordained as priests in England since 1992 and now make up a



Sarah Mullally was installed as the first female Bishop of London on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

third of the clergy.

The CofE separated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534. It claims that more than 40 per cent of people in England regard

themselves as members.

It is the mother church of the global Anglican Communion, which has around 85 million followers in more than 165 countries.

Other Anglican churches around the world have been appointing female bishops for years. The first was appointed in the United States in 1989.—AFP ■

Frank Sinatra, five parts of a remarkable life

PARIS — Crooner, charmer and fighter: Frank Sinatra died 20 years ago, leaving an indelible mark on the world.

AFP draws on its archives to look over his exceptional life. **"The Voice"**

Born on 12 December, 1915 in Hoboken, New Jersey, Sinatra — the son of Italian immigrants — cut his first record in 1939 and three years later was a star.

Over his lifetime, the elegant and clean-cut performer produced more than 100 records and dozens of hits such as "Strangers in the Night," "I've Got You Under My Skin" and "My Way."

His singing career saw highs but also lows, during which he turned to Hollywood, winning an Oscar in 1953 for the World War II army drama "From Here to Eternity."

On the stage into his late 70s, "The Voice" pulled in the crowds.

In 1962, at the height of the Elvis Presley craze, he caused a riot at Paris's legendary Olympia venue when fans rushed to see him on stage, turned out in "a night-blue suit with a red pocket handkerchief and a bow tie," according to an AFP report.

"At 11:30 pm organisers were still pushing back latecomers who were prepared to pay 5,000 old francs (today worth around

70 euros) for a stand-up place for the end of the performance," it says.

A ladies' man

Renowned for his many romantic conquests, the dashing Sinatra was first married to teenage sweetheart Nancy Barbato (1939-1949), with whom he had his three children Nancy, Frank Jr and Tina. Then followed Hollywood stars Ava Gardner (1951-57) and Mia Farrow (1966-68), and model Barbara Marx (from 1976).

In 1965, as rumours swirled of his impending marriage to Farrow, the performer made a highly public return to New York with the actress, 30 years his junior, on board his luxury yacht and pursued by boatloads of journalists.

"The arrival of Sinatra and his beautiful 'siren' made the front pages of all the local dailies alongside large headlines announcing that an American fighter jet was shot down by a Soviet missile near Hanoi," AFP writes.

Shadow of the mafia

Sinatra was dogged by allegations of links with the mafia which he always denied, including in the courts, but was never able to shake completely.

In 1963 he was stripped of his casino licence on allegations of

ties with Chicago mobster Salvatore "Momo" Giancana. At a 1981 gaming control board hearing on his request for a new licence, he was grilled about claims that he had delivered two million dollars in an attache case to mafia boss Lucky Luciano in Havana in 1947.

"If you can find me an attache case that could hold \$2 million, I'll give you the \$2 million," the singer replied," says an AFP story.

Sinatra won back his casino licence with the support of president Ronald Reagan.

Battlin' Frankie

Sinatra was also known for getting into scraps and fisticuffs.

In 1960 a security guard said he was punched up by the singer after he had been thrown out of an event. Just before, "Sinatra, who had been singing at a charity benefit banquet, had had a heated altercation with actor John Wayne and was escorted out in a very bad mood," the AFP account says.

Four years later, French photographers issued an outraged statement after the star swept through.

"Paris is not Chicago and we don't want Mr Sinatra acting out his number of 'tough guy' or 'charming gangster' by taking journalists for targets,"



Frank Sinatra with Ava Gardner in an undated photo, probably taken in 1951. PHOTO: AFP

they fumed.

1998: a voice silenced

Sinatra died on 14 May, 1998 in Los Angeles at the age of 82, after suffering a heart attack. New York's Empire State Building was lit up in blue in honour of "Ol' Blue Eyes."

From the Cannes Film Festival in France, director Martin Scorsese said "words cannot express my sadness."

His funeral was held in the only Catholic Church in Beverly

Hills with leading lights such as Nancy Reagan, Kirk Douglas and Bruce Springsteen among the hundreds in attendance.

The church was "filled with gardenias, roses and white lilies, Frank Sinatra's preferred colour of the flower," AFP's piece describes.

The only one of his songs played in the church was "Put Your Dreams Away," the piece with which he habitually closed his concerts, it says.—AFP ■



Myanmar girl (white) poises to shoot the ball in yesterday's AFF U-16 Girls' Championship 2018 at Bumi Sriwijaya Stadium, Palembang in Indonesia.
PHOTO:MFF

Myanmar wins silver at AFF U-16 Girls' Championship 2018

MYANMAR won the silver medal at the AFF U-16 Girls' Championship 2018 after they were defeated by defending champions Thailand in the final match at Bumi Sriwijaya Stadium, Palembang in Indonesia, yesterday.

Both teams performed well in the first half displaying speedy play and spirited counter-attacks.

The Myanmar U-16 girls team included goalkeeper Sein Lae Lae Oo, Khine Thazin Oo, May Thet Mon Myint, Pont Pont Pyae Mg, Song Hnin Phwe, Captain Myat Noe Khin, May Thwe Ko, Zin Mar Htwe, Phyu Phyu Win, Win Win and Swe Mar Aung.

The first half ended with neither teams scoring any goal.

Thailand were stronger in the second half, displaying

better stamina.

Myanmar also attacked openly with their speedy play at the start of the second half.

Thailand made an opening goal at the 46th minute mark through Janista Jinantuya.

Despite conceding the opening goal, Myanmar used power-play and attacked frequently, but all their efforts were thwarted by Thailand's defenders.

The Thailand keeper managed some excellent saves to deny Myanmar a goal.

The match ended 1-0, with the frazzled Myanmar girls failing to maintain their stamina.

Thailand won the championship, while Myanmar bagged the silver. Viet Nam won the bronze medal after beating Laos in the third-place play-off.
—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Sagaing United advances to next stage in General Aung San Shield 2018

SAGAING United has advanced to the second stage of the General Aung San Shield 2018 by beating Myawady FC 5-2 after the penalty shootout yesterday.

Both teams showcased their main players for the knockout match.

Myawady drew first blood at the 25th-minute mark through Thet Paing Ko.

However, Sagaing's brilliant player Bamber equalised for his team just before the end of the first half.

In the second half, Bamber gave the team its second goal by capitalising on the errors made by Myawady defenders. Just before the final whistle, Myawady FC earned a penalty shoot with Sagaing playing it rough. The penalty was taken by Myawady striker Ye Wai Yan Soe, who did not miss the chance to level the score at 2-2.

With both the teams failing to score in additional time, the outcome had to be decided through a penalty shootout.

Sagaing goalkeepers then saved three attempts by Aung Phyo, Kyaw Zin Htike and Myo Min Htike earning a 5-2 win for Sagaing United. The team has advanced to the next stage of the tournament.
—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



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