WE WILL WORK TOGETHER TO CONNECT MISSING TRANSPORT LINKS IN MEKONG SUB-REGION P-8-9 (OPINON)

NATIONAL

Delta people provide homes to Mro villagers

PAGE-3

NATIONAL

Freedom of creativity imperative for films

PAGE-6

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. V, No. 63, 6th Waxing of First Waso 1380 ME www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com Monday, 18 June 2018

Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye, centre-right, accepts a cash donation for families residing at temporary relief camps due to flash floods occurring in their homes in Mottama of Mon State.. **PHOTO: MNA**

Mon State faces flash floods

UNION MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye yesterday visited Mawlamyine and Mottama of Mon State that is facing flash floods due to continuous downpour since 16 June.

Accompanied by Chief Minister of Mon State Dr Aye Zan and officials he visited the places damaged by floods in the two towns.

First, the union minister and the chief minister and delegation arrived at a station hospital and a school in Mottama and made arrangements to repair the damaged parts of the buildings.

Later, the union minister and delegation looked into the requirements of Tatmadaw members, police officials, fire brigade members and departmental personnel, who were in charge of clearing the debris.

The union minister and delegation then provided cash aid to family members of homes damaged by the floods and wind in the town.

In Mawlamyine, the capital of Mon State, they coordinated with technicians to restore the Kyaikthalan Pagoda, which faced landslide and flood damage.

They then visited the flood victims at the temporary relief camp set up at a school and provided food supplies.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Rain forecasted to increase in Mon State, other southern parts in next two days

Admit the downpours and floods in certain parts of the country, especially in Mon State, there is a continuation of increase of rain in Mon and Kayin States and Taninthayi Region in the southern parts of the country in next two days as monsoon is vigorous over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weak to moderate elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal, according to the Myanmar Daily Weather Report issued by the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology yesterday.

Forecast for the capital Nay Pyi Taw and neighboring areas for today is isolated rain and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent, Yangon, the commercial city and neighboring areas is one or two rain and the degree of certainty is 100 per cent whereas Mandalay the cultural city in central Myanmar and neighboring areas is isolated rains and the degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

Squalls with rough sea are likely at times in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, and off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (9 - 12) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama and off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (6 - 8) feet in off and along Rakhine Coasts. — GNLM ■

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL
Interview with Deputy Minister U Soe Aung (SWRR) concerning boat crash survivors in Yathedaung Township
PAGE-7

BUSINESS
Bilateral trade with Japan worth US$150 million in April
PAGE-5

BUSINESS
Myanmar exports 242 tonnes of tamarind to Singapore, Thailand by sea in one week
PAGE-4

Eid festival, interfaith dinner held at Yangon's Strand Hotel

Ambassador U Hla Maung (rtd.)

Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko.

Pakistani Ambassador Dr. Khalid Hussain Memon

US Ambassador Mr. Scot Alan Marciel

Foreign ambassadors, members of interfaith and humanitarian organizations, religious leaders, entrepreneurs, and other invited guests at the Eid festival and interfaith dinner party at Strand Hotel. **PHOTO: MNA**

AN interfaith get-together dinner party for the Eid festival was held at the Strand Hotel in Yangon yesterday evening.

Attending the dinner party were Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, foreign ambassadors, members of interfaith organizations, religious leaders, humanitarian organizations, entrepreneurs, businessmen, and other invited guests. The opening speech was delivered by Dr. U Hla Maung (retired ambassador), the Patron (temp.) for the Myanmar Muslim Entrepreneur Association.

Next, Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko gave a speech saying that leaders around the world stress on the importance of peace building for socio-economic development, which includes promoting interfaith such as the night's event.

This was followed by speeches from US Ambassador Mr. Scot Alan Marciel and Pakistan Ambassador Dr. Khalid Hussain Memon. Finally, Chairman of the Myanmar Muslim Entrepreneur Association U Than Lwin thanked everyone in attendance and then began the dinner party. —Myanmar News Agency ■

USAID co-hosts patent and copyright forum in Yangon

THE United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Intellectual Property Proprietors' Association of Myanmar (IPPAM) have collaborated to hold the Patent and Copyright forum at the Co-operative Business Centre in Bahan Township yesterday.

The forum aims to promote industrial technological innovations, and literary and art enterprises by informing and preparing the public for the upcoming new laws.

IPPAM Vice Chairman U Thein Aung said the forum and the accompanying round-table discussion would examine and consider how small and medium enterprises (SMEs) could gain legal protection while developing innovative technology for the industrial sector. The forum also explores how the emergence of a copyright law can protect and solve infringement issues across all sectors of literature and art, including music, film, and thabin (drama). The new laws will include a system where the artiste will receive payment for the use of his/her work by a collective management organisation acting as the third party.

Patent and Copyright forum in progress at the Co-operative Business Centre in Bahan Township. **PHOTO: PWINT THITSAR**

Myanmar has an existing law, the Myanmar Copyright Act 1914, which is exceedingly irrelevant to modern times, and thus new laws are needed to give protection to artistes and inventors in the digital age, said U Thein Aung.

Present at the forum were Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Myint Thaung, IPPAM Chairman U Kyaw Kyaw Win, Vice Chairman U Thein Aung, UMFCCI's Joint General Secretary Daw Khine Khine Nwe, legal professionals, composer U Maung Maung (Maw Kyun), Chairman of Thabin Association U Poe Chit, engineers, innovators, and university undergraduates. IPPAM presented certificates to participants who attended the forum. —Pwint Thitsar ■

No passengers injured in train derailment in Mohnyin

NO passengers were injured after a Myitkyina bound special train was derailed in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State.

The accident occurred when a special train operated by locomotive driver identified as U Maung Maung Naing derailed at milepost No. 645/18 and milepost No. 645/199 between Nanmar and Myothit Halay railway stations this morning.

The cause of the derailment is still unknown.

Officials from the Myanma Railways rushed to the scene to evaluate the situation and investigate the accident.

The train services resumed their normal schedules starting from 9:20 am.—Mohnyin (IPRD) ■

Honouring the outstanding doesn't mean ignoring those who failed: Thura U Shwe Mann

Honouring the outstanding doesn't mean ignoring those who failed, said the leader of a prominent parliamentary commission yesterday at a ceremony held in honour of outstanding students and schools with high matriculation pass rates.

Thura U Shwe Mann, who chairs of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Legal Affairs and Special Cases Commission, was speaking at a ceremony in Pyu, a town in Bago north of Yangon, in which students of the town who had passed with distinction, as well as schools having high pass rates in the matriculation examination for the academic year 2017-2018, were honoured.

Thura U Shwe Mann delivers a speech at a ceremony, in Bago, to honour outstanding students and schools with high matriculation pass rates. **PHOTO: MNA**

Some prominent people in the world never passed the high school examination, but they developed and prospered through their own efforts and ways, he said, providing words of encouragement to students who had failed in the examination. Even as successful students have the opportunities to pursue higher learning, those who failed also have a bright future as their life does not end here, he noted. So, with a firm spirit they must find ways to achieve success, he said, calling for teachers to provide inspiration and support to the students.

The most basic requisite for the development of a region or a town and the economic, education, social and other sectors, as well as the enforcement of the rule of law, is the involvement of grassroots, he said, highlighting the importance of all-inclusive efforts for all stakeholders to reach this end.

Thura U Shwe Mann, Speaker of Bago Region Hluttaw U Khin Maung Yin, Region Cabinet Minister Daw Nyunt Nyunt Htay, MPs U Than Nyunt, Daw Cho Cho, Dr Mya Thaung and U Min Oo, and members of the region parliament presented gifts and certificates of honour to students who passed with distinction in the examination. The principals of the schools with high pass rates were also awarded.

A five-distinction winner and a school head gave the words of thanks. Thura U Shwe Mann then explained the structure, goals and responsibilities of the commission he chairs, adding the commission would assign its members with specific duties to assess the legal affairs, policies and objectives, in connection with the education sector.

"We must know the means, the length of time and the degree of modifications needed to rescue the country's education system after determining its weaknesses and faults," said Thura U Shwe Mann.

He then cordially conversed with the attendees, including education officers, officials, members of the Myanmar Women Affairs Federation, Myanmar Red Cross Society and fire brigades, school heads, students, ward/village administrators and other guests. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Delta people provide homes to Mro villagers

Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Nyi Pu presents certificate of honour to Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region U Hla Moe Aung **PHOTO: KHIN MAUNG WIN**

The government and the people of the Ayeyawady Region presented 44 homes, a road and hand-pumps to the Mro people of Thittonnar-khwahson village, Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State, yesterday.

Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Nyi Pu and Chief Minister of Ayeyawady Region U Hla Moe Aung attended the ceremony at the village, during which the former spoke words of thanks, while U Hla Moe Aung spoke about the purpose of making a donation of Ks4176.76 million for the homes, road and pumps.

A villager also thanked the donors of the delta region.

The two chief ministers, officials and the Mro villagers then posed for a commemorative photograph.

U Nyi Pu also met with a team wishing to produce a film and a documentary showcasing the beauty of Rakhine State and sincerity of its ethnic peoples. During the discussions the chief minister and the team led by movie director Zin Yaw Maung Maung discussed filming of a story promoting the image of Rakhine State and proving the simplicity of its natives with invaluable ancient heritages, long and breathtaking coastline, large stretches of farmlands, and mighty Rakhine Yoma mountain ranges as the background.

They also discussed the creation of a documentary illustrating co-existence and the geographic conditions of the state.—Nay Win Tun/Tin Tun (IPRD) ■

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

A slight earthquake of magnitude (4.6) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (25)miles southwest of Phyu) latitude 18.23°N, longitude 96.17°E, depth (10) kilometers about (51) miles southwest of Taungoo seismological observatory was recorded at (20)hr (12)min (36)sec M.S.T. on 17th June, 2018.—DMH ■

Landslide hit Mon State, no casualties reported

A LANDSLIDE destroyed two houses and a monastery in Chaungzone Township, Mon State early this morning.

No casualties were reported in the accident that occurred after heavy rains struck the area. A wooden house which belongs to U Thein Tan from Nyaunglan Village and a home built of brick which is owned by U Nyunt Hlaing and a monastery from Apyaing Village were damaged by the landslide. The estimated loss of property in the incident is worth more than Ks. 1.5 million.

Local authorities and social organization members went to the scene to carry out rescue operations and the disaster affected victims are being given necessary assistance by the village officials.—Township IPRD ■

Homes submerged, residents evacuated after heavy rains hit Mudon

AROUND 35 houses in Ward-4, Mudon Township in Mon State were submerged in floodwaters and about 150 residents were evacuated to a government school after heavy rains drenched the area early this morning.

Food for the flood victims was provided by the ward administrator. Some rural bridges in the region were also drowned by floodwaters and a fence in a government school collapsed due to severe rains.

The local authorities, policemen, firefighters and residents are carrying out rescue operations in the flood affected areas.—Mudon (IPRD) ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

ACTING CHIEF EDITOR
Aye Min Soe,
ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

EXPATRIATE CONSULTANT EDITOR
Mark Angeles,
markrangeles@gmail .com

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Kyaw Myaing

SENIOR TRANSLATORS
Zaw Min,
zawmin.gnlm@gmail.com
Win Ko Ko Aung,
kowink2aung@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR
Ye Htut Tin,
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

LOCAL NEWS EDITORS
Tun Tun Naing (Editor),
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor),
nwenwe9131@gmail.com

TRANSLATORS
Khaing Thanda Lwin,
Hay Mar Tin Win,
Ei Myat Mon
Zaw Htet Oo
Kyaw Zin Lin
Kyaw Zin Tun

REPORTER
May Thet Hnin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
mayreporter.mm@gmail.com

PHOTOGRAPHER
Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar

COMPUTER TEAM
Tun Zaw ,
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin

EDITORIAL SECTION
(+95) (01)8604529,
Fax – (+95) (01) 8604305

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

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
www.facebook.com/
globalnewlightofmyanmar

MYANMAR DigitalNews
Powered by NPE
www.mdn.gov.mm

Write for us

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

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

Shwe Property expo to showcase nearly 4,000 fair-cost apartments on 22nd June

A three-day expo organized by Shwe Property will be held from 22nd to 24th June, showcasing nearly 4,000 fair-cost apartments, according to Shwe Property.

Over 30 construction companies will join this expo. Apartments worth Ks20 to 100 million per unit can be purchased through AYA bank's long-term home loan plan. Those apartments in various townships of Yangon are ready to accommodate.

We have a regular sales for those apartments worth Ks20 to 100 million linked with bank's home loan, said Director U Kaung Thu Win of Shwe Property.

"About 40 to 50 units were sold at both property expos presented by AYA and Yoma banks", he maintained.

Shwe Property's the Biggest Home Loan Expo brought to you by AYA Bank was held at Hotel Novotel Yangon Max Hotel on 9th and 10th June. —Nyein Nyein ■

Myanmar exports 242 tonnes of tamarind to Singapore, Thailand by sea in one week

MYANMAR exported 242 tonnes of tamarind to Singapore and Thailand through the sea route in the week ending 2 June, registering a decrease of over 50 tonnes against the previous week before 27 May, according to the commerce ministry.

Between 27 May and 2 June, local exporters sold tamarind weighing 192 tonnes to Singapore, while neighbouring Thailand imported 50 tonnes from Myanmar, earning US$85,260 from the export.

In the export market during the period, a tonne of fresh tamarind is worth approximately $380-$400, while the previously harvested tamarind was sold for some $200 per tonne.

In the previous week starting 20 May, the country exported more than 290 tonnes of tamarind to importers.

In the domestic market, growers continued to receive a handsome price for ripe tamarind due to the high demand. Ripe tamarind is currently sold at Ks1,800 per viss (3.6 lbs) in the wholesale market, whereas a viss of tamarind is worth Ks2,500 in the retail market. The current prices of tamarind remained unchanged compared to the previous week.

Tamarind. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

A large volume of tamarind continues to flow into Pyay wholesale markets from Kyaukpadaung, Kyangin, Hinthada and other regions. In a week, 1,800 viss of tamarind went to Rakhine State and the Yangon Region.—Shwe Khine ■

Trade with ROK exceeds $46 mil. in April

EXTERNAL trade between Myanmar and the Republic of Korea (ROK) this April was US$46.8 million in total, a slight decrease in value by $2.5 million matched against last April, the Commerce Ministry reported.

Myanmar's imports outdid exports in bilateral trade in the first month of this FY. Myanmar exported $19.4 million worth of domestic products and imported $27.4 million worth of Korean products. When compared with last April, this year saw an increase in value of exports by $0.716 million while the bilateral import value decreased by $3.2 million.

Last fiscal year, Myanmar-South Korea trade was $798 million, a decline by $68.28 million than that of the previous 2016-2017 FY. The bilateral trade reached its peak of $1.57 billion in 2013-2014 FY. It decreased to $862 million in 2014-2015 FY and $656 million in the following FY.

Cosmetics, foodstuff, electronic equipment, mobile devices and other commodities are usually imported from South Korea while Myanmar exports agricultural products, including cashew nuts, mangoes, rice, beans and pulses, and miscellaneous products to the East Asian country.

South Korea's investments in Myanmar at the end of May this fiscal year reached $6.98 million, according to a report of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration. Its investment in Myanmar last fiscal year was worth $253.9 million.

The price of Sein Ta Lone mangoes from Monywa Township has increased. **PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE**

As part of efforts to promote bilateral trade and investment, a project to develop Korea-Myanmar industrial complex has been implemented in Hlegu Township in commercial hub Yangon. With the aim of helping Korean companies enter Myanmar market, the project was signed by the two sides last June.—Khine Khant■

A woman piling grains at a rice depot. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Bilateral trade with Japan worth US$150 million in April

MYANMAR'S trade value with its development donor Japan in April during interim period prior to next fiscal year 2018-2019 was recorded at US$150.6 million, according to the figures released by the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar's export to Japan fetched $97.4 million whereas import was worth $53.2 million.

Bilateral trade value with Japan was worth $1.92 billion in 2017-2018 FY, $2.03 billion in 2016-2017 FY, $1.84 billion in 2015-16 FY, $2.3 billion in 2014-2015 FY, $1.8 billion in 2013-2014 FY, $1.49 billion in 2012-2013 FY and $822 million in 2011-2012 FY.

Agro products including rice and broken rice, various peas, soy bean, sesame seeds and ginger, fruits and apparel from garment sector on Cut-Make-Pack basis are exported to Japan whereas machinery, garment raw materials, consumer products and electronic tools flow into Myanmar.

Japan brought in foreign investments of $384 million into Myanmar during last fiscal year. Additionally, over 45 Japanese companies invested in Thilawa so far, primarily executing manufacturing business.— Ko Htet ■

Myanmar-Bangladesh border trade reaches almost $4.4 million in present FY

MYANMAR-Bangladesh border trade topped US$4.37 million in the current interim financial year, according to the statistical report of the Commerce Ministry.

Border exports from Myanmar to the People's Republic of Bangladesh are always greater than its imports. Over the first 69 days of this FY, Myanmar exported locally produced commodities amounting to $4.35 million to the South Asian country and imported only $0.02 million worth of goods.

Labourers unload sacks of onion from a truck. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Both countries conduct bilateral border trade primarily through Sittway and Maungtaw border trade camps. Between 1 April and 8 June this year, trade via the Sittway gate was $2.093 million, including $0.02 million in the imports whereas trade via the Maungtaw trade station was $2.278 million. During the period, there was no import through the Maungtaw point.

This FY saw an increase in value of Myanmar-Bangladesh trade by $1.74 million in comparison with the same time last year when the bilateral border trade was $2.63 million.

Saltwater prawns and fish, bamboos, ginger, peanuts, mung beans, dried plums, garlic, rice, blankets, candy, plum jams, footwear, frozen foods, chemicals, leather, jute products, knitwear, beverages, tobacco, plastics, wood and products made from human hair are the marketable items at the Myanmar-Bangladesh cross-borders.

Bangladesh imported 267 tonnes of Emahta rice from Myanmar via the Maungtaw gate last month.—Shwe Khine ■

Over 9,700 motorbikes imported in late May

BORDER traders imported 9,720 motorbikes valued at US$5.103 million from China, India and Thailand in the week starting 26 May, according to trade authorities.

The current import figures showed a decrease by 148 motorbikes compared to the previous week ending 25 May, when Myanmar imported 9,868 motorbikes.

Between 26 May and 1 June this year, the country bought 23 motorbikes worth $24,000 through the Tamu border trade camp, 275 motorbikes worth $59,000 through the Kanpaiktee border gate, 1,372 motorbikes worth $2.264 million through the Myawady border station and 8,050 motorbikes worth $2.756 million through the Muse border point of entry. During the same period, local importers bought 363 three-wheel motorcycles from China through the Muse 105th mile trade zone.

The week saw a decline in the imports of motorbikes from the Myawady gate. However, the imports of the same through the Kanpaiktee border station showed an increase in quantity compared to the previous week. —Kyu Kyu ■

Fruit trading at Muse resumes on 11th December, with around 200 truck-loads of watermelon and 50 to 70 truckloads of muskmelons entering Muse. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Over 1,000 tons of goods exported to China through Mongyu in May

A total of 1,089 tons of goods were sent to China through Mongyu Township in Tachilek District in May.

The export items are 600 tons of Tissue-culture banana, 269 tonnes of pumpkin, 28 tons of raw rubber, 84 tonnes of corn without corncob, two tonnes of watermelon and 106 tonnes of industrial used lime .

Earlier, there was only illegal trade channel from Mongyu to China. In 2016, to combat against illegal trade and inspect border gate, Shan State government assigned a representative. After that, legal trade has improved in this area and the state's revenue also increased. –Min Aung (Taunggyi) ■

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
Trade Mark Ads
Call
Thin Thin May,
09251022355,
09974424848

Freedom of creativity imperative for films

FREEDOM for film creators is imperative for the new Film and Video Censor Board, said Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint in Yangon yesterday.

Speaking to members of the newly formed board, the union minister stressed the importance of ensuring this freedom. Appropriate means should be taken through coordinated measures if their work or creation may harm the human society or certain parts of society or specific groups, he warned.

Director-General of Information and Public Relations Department U Ye Naing was elected as the chair of the board, which has given the green light to 421 scripts, 295 Myanmar films, 239 foreign films, 1,545 video plays, 422 MTVs, and nine other video clips censored by the previous body.

D-G U Ye Naing also explained the formation of the new board with 15 members under the existing laws and rules, the accomplishments of the former board, censoring of Myanmar subtitles for foreign TV series, and the pros and cons and efforts of the new board to work while the film laws are being amended. U Kyi Soe Tun, patron of the Myanmar Film Association, and Chairman U Zin Wine shared their experiences after the self-introduction session for the new members including U Kyaw Oo, Daw Swe Zin Htaik, Daw Mya Kyi and Daw Yin Myo May. The board will serve for two years from 1 April 2018 until 31 May 2020. In the afternoon, the union minister visited IPRD offices and libraries in Bahan, Yankin, South Okkalapa, Thingangyun, Hline and Ahlon townships of the Yangon region. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint observes a traditional handiwork at the mini-museum at an Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) in Hline Township. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**

Group art exhibition held in Mandalay

THE Mandalay Hill Art Gallery is currently hosting a collective art exhibition, showcasing 120 works created by 93 artists who are members of the Mandalay Hill Art Gallery, according to the event organisers.

The group exhibition began on June 16 and will last through June 22, featuring oils, acrylic and watercolour paintings. Subject matters include landscapes, still-life historic pagodas and other traditional structures in Mandalay Region.

The event organisers have invited enthusiasts to visit the gallery and enjoy the artworks of those artists during the one-week event. The gallery opens its doors between 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

The Mandalay Hill Art Gallery is located at the base of Mandalay Hill near the prominent lion statutes of Aungmyethazan Township.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay) ■

Guests viewing the numerous works of arts on exhibit at the Mandalay Hill Art Gallery by its ninety-three member artists. **PHOTO: THIHA KO KO (MANDALAY)**

Damaged Yenantha Bridge rebuilt in Magway Region

CONSTRCTION authorities on Sunday started repair Yenantha Bridge, an important bailey bridge on Magway-Thayet-Kanma-Pyay route, which was recently destroyed by heavy rain.

The Yenantha Bridge crossing Mindon Creek is located at mile post No. 20/0 in the north of Yenantha Village on Thayet-Kanma road in Kanma Township, Thayet District, Magway Region.

Experienced engineers and skilled workers are putting forth concerted efforts to rebuild the damaged bridge, working to upgrade the bridge as quickly as possible.

The 720-foot long and 15-foot wide bailey bridge was firstly opened on 26 September, 2009.—Kyaw Zeya Win (IPRD)■

Workers on task upgrading the Yenantha Bridge recently destroyed by heavy rains. **PHOTO: KYAW ZEYA WIN (IPRD)**

Over 38,000 acres of community forest to be developed in Sagaing Region

SAGAING Region Forest Department said it is working to establish over 38,000 acres of community forests in six districts in the regions within the current 2018-2019 fiscal year.

According to the project, the forest authorities will develop a total of 38,789 acres of community forests, including 21,095 acres in two townships in Kantbalu District; 2,711 acres in four townships in Shwebo District; 9,620 acres in seven townships in Katha District; 190 acres in two townships in Monywa District; 2,978 acres in four townships in Yinmabin District and 2,194 acres in three townships in Kalay District.

The key objectives of the establishment of the community forests are to conserve the country's natural environment, biodiversity and ecosystem. It also aims to improve the forests, to arrange the cutting in order to keep well within the productive powers of the forests and to ensure a permanent and sustained yield from them.

A member of the department said that public involvement plays an important role in preserving the forests. The people-centered tree-planting project is aimed at raising public awareness over the sustainable growth of the natural environment, benefits of planting trees and their economic importance.—Win Oo (Zeyataing)■

Interview with SWRR Deputy Minister U Soe Aung concerning boat crash survivors in Yathedaung Township

By Min Thit (MNA)
Photo: Nay Lin

Deputy Minister U Soe Aung answers questions by journalists during his interview at Nga Khu Ya receptiion centre yesterday. **PHOTO: NAY LIN**

Men and women enter separate housing facilities during their stay at Nga Khu Ya reception centre.
PHOTO: NAY LIN

An independent local media group gathering news in Maungtaw Township on 14 and 15 June interviewed Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, U Soe Aung, who is in Nga Khu Ya Reception Centre to supervise assistance given to the boat crash survivors from last week.

Q: Can you tell us about the resettlement progress for the boat crash survivors? We've heard some of them are Bangladeshi citizens, so how will you deal with that too?

A: Authorities found 104 boat crash survivors on 11 June and brought them to the reception centre. We know that 12 are from Bangladesh and 92 have previously lived in either Buthidaung or Maungtaw Township.

For the twelve people who claimed to be from Bangladesh, our Immigration Director contacted the Bangladesh Consulate in Sittway. The consul talked with them through a phone but said he wasn't satisfied and will come interview them at an undefined date after 17 June. The twelve Bangladeshi citizens claim they have ID cards and if the consul approves after the interview then we will follow proper diplomatic protocol.

For the remaining 92 people, they have different objectives. Some of them say they were returning from Bangladesh, some were going to Malaysia to work; all twelve Bangladeshi were going to find work in Malaysia; and they had to pay Bangladesh taka (BDT) 20,000 each to the boatmen. The total cost for each of them is said to be BDT 200,000 (approx. MMK 3,221,275).

We think the boat was damaged from bad weather and the boatmen docked at the nearest coast. We have reason to believe the people who claim they are from Buthidaung and Maungtaw have stayed in camps on the Bangladesh side.

We asked them what they would like to do next and they replied they want to resettle back here. But most of them say they still have relatives back in the camps in Bangladesh. So we are contacting their nearest relatives in other villages.

The next step would be building houses for them in the village they are resettling and working with Bangladesh to repatriate their relatives from the camps over there.

Q: When we were talking with the boat crash survivors they told us they didn't receive the repatriation forms from Myanmar during their time in the camps. Can you comment on that?

A: Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye faced a similar issue when he visited the camps in Bangladesh. The displaced persons at the camp there told him they didn't receive any sort of forms for repatriation, so the union minister explained it to them.

We have included these forms for repatriation in Myanmar and Bangladesh's agreements and we have sent the forms to Bangladesh as well. We contacted them and taken diplomatic actions to remind them of the importance of the form and distributing them. The previous batch that arrived here are already in the process of resettling in their native towns with the aid and support we agreed to give.

Q: We know that you have build houses for the Mro ethnic people but when we met with people from the Islamic community they said no one's come to rebuild their burned down houses. What is your response to that?

A: We've completed rebuilding the 22 houses burned down in Pantawpyin near Maungtaw and in fact people are already living there. Then there's the ongoing construction of 60 houses Kyainchaung Taung. We signed an MOU with India for the project and the Indian Government selected the company to head the project. We help people rebuild their house as close to their native town as possible.

Q: Can you tell us how many people have returned from Bangladesh, both legally and illegally?

A: Currently no one has returned from Bangladesh legally. A family of five returned of their own choice. A group of 62 people returned sometime ago and now there are 92 people at the centre here. These people were not returned by the Bangladesh government. They returned of their own choice. ■

Flash floods in Taninthayi, Mon State, due to intense rain

THE towns and villages of Mon State and Taninthayi Region were flooded yesterday, the meteorology and the respective information and public relations departments (IPRDs) reported.

Owing to the heavy rain and wind yesterday, floods were seen in the Taungwine quarter of Mawlamyaing Town. Many houses were flooded, and over 100 people, including children and old men, were stranded in some buildings. Rescue measures were undertaken to help them.

Similarly, floods were witnessed around Mawlamyine University, Mawlamyine General Hospital and some government offices. Patients in the General Hospital were successfully shifted to safety, according to officials.

The floods damaged electric lamps and trees, while the Thanlyin Bridge (Mawlamyaing) was closed to the public.

Floods also occurred in Thanbyuzayat, Paung and Ye townships in Mon State. The public was rescued by government officials, according to the information and public relations departments in the flooded townships. In Thanithayi Region, floods due to intense rain were reported in Kampani Village in Kyauksin Village-tract.

A dam in the region broke owing to the intense rain.

Likewise, in Kalein Aung Town in Dawei District in Thanithayi Region, a road near milepost 3 and one furlong was flooded by Dawei River. The public experienced traffic problems in the town. The losses incurred because of the floods could not be estimated, according to the Thanbyuzayat IPRD.

—Townships IPRD ■

18 JUNE 2018
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

We will work together to connect missing transport links in Mekong sub-region

A NEW system of co-managed funds was proposed at the summit of the Ayeyarwady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), attended by government leaders from Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam on 16 June.

At the 8th ACMECS, President U Win Myint welcomed Thailand's initiative of engaging development partners, and international and regional organizations with a view to seek potential funding and technical support for ACMECS cooperation.

At the summit, ACMECS members, potential development partners and international financial institutions were invited to contribute to the ACMECS fund, which will be the main source of funding for joint development projects, and implement the ACMECS master plan which is the first grand plan under the ACMECS cooperation since its establishment in 2003.

Myanmar always attaches great importance to cooperation with the countries in the Mekong sub-region and will work together to find the missing links and ways to connect these missing transport links.

In the first phase of the master plan, the five ACMECS countries will focus solely on those urgently needed missing links along the East West Economic Corridor (EWEC) and Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) in the Mekong sub-region, including hardware, digital, and energy infrastructure, as well as the harmonization of rules and customs regulations to facilitate trade and investments between ACMECS countries.

Some of the important projects to be implemented under the Master Plan 2019-2023, adopted by the leaders at the summit, include the improvement of road connectivity between Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, and creation of an environment enabling Mekong countries to increase intra-regional trade and facilitation of travel among the Mekong countries.

At the summit, President U Win Myint reviewed the progress and challenges of the ACMECS cooperation and discussed the future direction for the cooperation, particularly regarding the implementation of projects and programmes related to hard and soft connectivity, and human resources development under the ACMECS Master Plan 2019-2023.

The master plan comes at a time when Myanmar is focusing on speeding up the development of multi-modal transport infrastructure, which would connect the missing links along the regional economic corridors, especially the East West Economic Corridor and the Southern Economic Corridor.

On the sidelines of the meeting before the summit, President U Win Myint exchanged views with Thailand Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha on upgrading the transport linkages between Myanmar and Thailand, including cross-border linkages between Dawei Deep Sea Port and the eastern coast of Thailand, promoting trade and investment, repatriation of displaced persons from Thailand to Myanmar and cooperation under the ACMECS framework.

Myanmar always attaches great importance to cooperation with the countries in the Mekong sub-region and will work together to find the missing links and ways to connect these missing transport links.

The Important Project for Facilitating Connectivity between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Myanmar

By Swan Pyae (MMRD)

Myanmar's Geographic Advantage and Opportunities

Myanmar is located in the strategic region of the Asian continent which can bridge East Asia, South Asia and South East Asia together. It lies between the two most thriving economies: China and India, and its geographic advantage has grabbed attention of the economic giants to stretch their economic tentacles to South East Asia. Considering its geographical positioning, Myanmar has a burgeoning potential to gain the economic advantage by strengthening connectivity with its neighbours.

However, despite of proximity to India and Bangladesh, Myanmar's connectivity with these countries has been limited. While the products from China and ASEAN countries have been massively flowing into Myanmar through land custom stations, the flow of products from India and Bangladesh has been minimal. To balance this trade skewness Myanmar has to pay attention to connectivity domains and fully integrate itself with the West.

BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement

Just in the right moment, the four South Asian nations_ Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal_ have signed BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) on 15 June 2015. It is a framework agreement that aims at enabling vehicles to enter any of the four nations without the need for trans-shipment of goods from one country's truck to another's at the border. Under the system, cargo vehicles are to be tracked electronically, permits are to be issued online and sent electronically to all land ports. Vehicles will be fitted with an electronic seal that alerts regulators every time the container door is opened.

Signing and implementation of the BBIN agreement will promote safe, economical efficient and environmentally sound road transport in the sub-region and will further help each country in creating an institutional mechanism for regional integration. BBIN countries will be benefited by mutual cross border movement of passenger and goods for overall economic development of the region. The people of the four countries will benefit through seamless movement of goods and passenger across borders.

Study for BBIN + Myanmar Connectivity

Myanmar Marketing Research & Development (MMRD) in partnership with Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS), an International think-tank organization based in India for working towards social justice, economic development and environment balance in and across the countries in the Bay of Bengal Region, has been working in Myanmar for BBIN+M Connectivity project. Since April 2017, MMRD has been conducting the study in the important nodes, borders and trade hubs in Myanmar and conducted a series of meetings with government officials, trade associations, transport operators and other related stakeholders of the project in Nay Pyi Taw and other locations. At the same time, the other country partners from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal have been undertaking the same studies in their respective countries. The study is an international and integrated effort between the research partners from five countries to bring together the related government agencies for the cross-border transit agreement.

The broad objectives of the study are: (1) to identify the corridor-specific impediments to explore difficulties and issues, (2) to contribute towards effective implementation including soft infrastructure, (3) to identify the technical and capacity building needs for stakeholders to achieve effective implementation of transit protocols and (4) to organize advocacy dialogues and capacity building exercises for higher political buy-in for smooth implementation of BBIN +M connectivity.

> "The study is an international and integrated effort between the research partners from five countries to bring together the related government agencies for the cross-border transit agreement."

The focus of the study is on road connectivity with the countries, mainly India and Bangladesh, to the west of Myanmar. The two road corridors: (1) Tamu – Mandalay – Yangon – Myawaddy for Myanmar – India and (2) Maungdaw – Sittwe – Yangon for Myanmar – Bangladesh, which lead to border trade with India and Bangladesh were identified for the study. The study observed the main import and export items from and to India and Bangladesh to understand the condition of the trade.

Findings at the Borders and Payment Transactions

MMRD finds that there are still many corridor specific impediments in the studied corridors. In theMyanmar – India corridor, there are issues of border instability and frequent border shutdown. Likewise, Myanmar – Bangladesh border is exposed to security threats. The study finds that border stability plays a pivotal role in facilitating cross-border movement of cargo and passengers.

Another overarching issue for connectivity is the limited use of formal bank-to-bank payment system in the borders. To enforce formal payment through Asian Clearing Union (ACU) Mechanism in border trade transactions, the Central Bank of Myanmar has already named Kanbawza bank, Kaba Yadana Bank, Co-operative Bank and Ayeyarwaddy as ACU Designated Banks since 25th February, 2016. For Myanmar – India, the agreement has set between Myanma Economic Bank's (MEB) Tamu branch and United Bank of India's (UBI) Moreh branch to allow up to $10,000 worth of trade value per bank draft and to trade under Letter of Credit (L/C) if the amount exceeds $10,000 in a trade transaction at the border. The respective USD and Rupee bank accounts of MEB have been opened at UBI's Moreh branch for traders to conduct formal bank payment. Similarly, ACU accounts in Bangladesh's Sonali Bank Ltd and Myanmar's MEB have been opened for formal payment system between Myanmar – Bangladesh border trade. Despite these agreements, the actual practice of formal banking system is still very limited and the traders are still heavily relying on informal payments at the borders.

Infrastructure Issues

There are also at-the-border and off-the-border infrastructural gaps. Tamu, Myanmar's border post with India, lacks sophisticated warehouses, mechanical handling equipment and plant quarantine facilities. The jetties and port facilities in Sittwe and Maungdaw will also require upgradation.

Other obstacles include limited bilateral coordination between the government agencies, the need to upgrade border custom clearance system, lack of commercial interest on the border businesses and people in the area and lack of framework agreement for trade, transport and transit facilitation between Myanmar and BBIN. Moreover, there are concerns of losing jobs by the local people if the transit trade happens in the regional countries. These are the areas which have to be addressed by not only at the state level but also at the regional level through cooperation and integration between the governments.

Despite these infrastructural gaps, the good news is there are also development projects which have potential in the future to promote connectivity between Myanmar – India and Myanmar - Bangladesh. Most prominent projects are: Kaladan Multi-Model Transit Transport project which has the potential to become an alternative corridor between Myanmar and India if completed, India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway which is under the development, Kayin Chaung Economic Zone near Maungdaw in Rakhine State which can enhance the trade between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Potentiality for Connectivity

Connectivity plays a critical role to bring development, prosperity and friendship in the region. In the dialogue event organized by MMRD on 7th March, 2018, in Nay Pyi Taw, the India Ambassador to Myanmar said it is not sufficient to only builde hard infrastructure of transport corridors like roads, bridges, ports, etc., it is equally important to supplement the hard infrastructures with the soft infrastructures like trade facilitation agreement, border management SOPs, land border crossing agreement and Motor Vehicle Agreement that can enable both the passengers and cargo traffic to move back and forth. Furthermore, it is important to take care of the local implications along the corridor for the people to be fully benefited by the connectivity.

Facilitating BBIN+M connectivity may have a long way to go, but it is not an insurmountable challenge in the effort to achieve the goal together!

*****

MDB Climate Finance Hit Record High of $35.2 Billion in 2017

CLIMATE financing by the world's six largest multilateral development banks (MDBs) rose to a 7-year high of $35.2 billion in 2017, up 28% from the previous year.

The MDBs' latest joint report on climate financing said $27.9 billion, or 79% of the 2017 total, was devoted to climate mitigation projects that aim to reduce harmful emissions and slow down global warming.

The remaining 21%, or $7.4 billion, of financing for emerging and developing nations was invested in climate adaptation projects that help economies deal with the effects of climate change such as unusual levels of rain, worsening droughts, and extreme weather events.

In 2016, climate financing from the MDBs had totaled $27.4 billion.

The latest MDB climate finance figures are detailed in the 2017 Joint Report on Multilateral Development Banks' Climate Finance, combining data from the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank Group and the World Bank Group (World Bank, IFC, and MIGA). These banks account for the vast majority of multilateral development finance. In October 2017, the Islamic Development Bank joined the MDB climate finance tracking groups, and its climate finance figures will be included in reports from 2018 onwards.

Climate funds such as the Climate Investment Funds (CIF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund, the Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Fund (GEEREF), the European Union's funds for Climate Action, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and others have also played an important role in boosting MDB climate finance. As well as the $35.2 billion of multilateral development finance, the same adaptation and mitigation projects attracted an additional $51.7 billion from other sources of financing last year.

Of the 2017 total, 81% was provided as loans. Other types of financial instruments included policy-based lending, grants, guarantees, equity, and lines of credit.

Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia and the Pacific were the three major developing regions receiving the funds. The report contains a breakdown of climate finance by country.

The sharp increase came in response to the ever more pressing challenge of climate change. Calls to galvanize climate finance were at the heart of events such as the One Planet Summit in Paris in December 2017, 2 years after the historic Paris Agreement was adopted. Multilateral banks began publishing their climate investment in developing countries and emerging economies jointly in 2011, and in 2015, MDBs and the International Development Finance Club agreed joint principles for tracking climate adaptation and mitigation finance.

Climate finance addresses the specific financial flows for climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. These activities contribute to make MDB finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development, in line with the Paris Agreement. The MDBs are currently working on the development of more specific approaches to reporting their activities and how they are aligned with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

"ADB's climate investments reached $4.5 billion last year, a 21% increase from 2016 and in line with our climate finance commitment to reach $6 billion by 2020. ADB will continue to deepen its collaboration with other MDBs while employing consistent and rigorous methodologies to track climate finance," said ADB Vice-President for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development Mr. Bambang Susantono. "ADB acknowledges the critical role of external funding and has accessed $265 million in concessional financing from the Green Climate Fund to date. It also continues to establish innovative financing facilities, such as the Asia Pacific Climate Finance Fund, which supports financial risk management products that can help unlock financing for climate investments in clean technologies and that build resilience to climate risks."—ADB ■

CRIME NEWS

Over 130 victims trafficked in five months

By May Thet Hnin

A total of 133 persons were victims of human trafficking in 85 cases from January through May 2018, according to the anti-human trafficking police force.

Of the 133 victims, 119 were women and 14 were men. A total of 231 offenders were involved in human trafficking in the five months, of which 71 were men and 160 women.

Among the cases investigated by the police, 26 were reported from Shan State, 23 from the Yangon Region and 13 from the Mandalay Region, with the remaining cases registered in other states and regions.

Myanmar registered 85 cases of human trafficking in January and May, and of these, 35 were related to forced marriages with Chinese men. In other cases, 11 women were forced into prostitution in the country, while three were related to job exploitation.

The anti-human trafficking police force is seeking more offenders involved in these cases. Experts have identified political instability and poverty as the root cause of human trafficking. Human trafficking has become rampant because of the small amount of money needed, simple transportation and easy means of communication.

Myanmar cooperated with Thailand and China to combat trafficking by opening cooperation offices. Myanmar is one of the anti-trafficking actors in the region and Great Mekong sub-region, said Police Major Khin Maung Kywe from the No. 6 anti-human trafficking police force in Yangon.

"The traffickers target those who lack knowledge and are poor. Many fall prey to fraudsters in their quest for better living standards. Most traffickers directly approach the targets. A woman must be cautious and discuss with this with her parents before believing anyone," he added.

According to the 2005 Anti-Trafficking in Person Law, people who traffic women and children shall be given a minimum 10-year imprisonment or maximum life imprisonment, or fined. Money or property received through trafficking will be confiscated by the government.

According to the 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report, there are seven types of trafficking crimes, with 69.7 per cent of the trafficking carried out for forced marriage, 13.6 per cent for the sex trade, 10 per cent for labour exploitation and forced labour, 4.8 per cent for child trafficking, 1.4 per cent for slavery, 0.3 per cent for forced fostering and 0.2 per cent for sexual exploitation.

According to reports on transnational human trafficking, 80 per cent of the victims are sent to China, 10 per cent to Thailand and 6 per cent to Malaysia. Some 4 per cent of the human trafficking occurs domestically. Women account for 85 per cent of trafficking victims, including minors. Child trafficking constitutes 4.38 per cent of the crimes.

Human trafficking cases have increased each year. The government should conduct anti-human trafficking activities, in cooperation with the Hluttaw, civil society organisations and the public.

The government has also assigned an anti-human trafficking police force unit in the border area. The anti-human trafficking police force took legal action against traffickers under the 2005 Anti-Trafficking in Person Law. The Anti-Trafficking in Person Law is being amended, and the new law will be enforced soon. ■

Multiple drug dealers seized in Mandalay, Shan State

From left to right, Kyaw Hla, Shanladwe, and Lawchat seen with their confiscated drugs. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Acting on a tip-off, a combined team of an anti-drug squad and the local police searched a home in Tharaaye Ward, Kyaukpadaung Township on 15 June and discovered 3,427 yaba pills (a synthetic-amphetamine-based narcotic) and Ks291,100.

Similarly, another team searched a motorcycle driven by Saw Htoo at the corner of Manawhary Street and 49th Street, Htunton Ward, Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay Region. The police seized 145 yaba pills and a mobile phone. A confession by Saw Htoo led the police to another suspect Tin Maung Win (a) Yusup, from whose mortorcycle they seized 315 yaba pills, Ks72,000 cash and a mobile phone.

Next, on 16 June, the police searched Kaung Myat San (a) Fatty (a) Lin Lin at the corner of Thayawady Mingyi Street and 73rd Street, Ka Ward, Pyigyitagon Township. They seized 15 yaba pills and a mobile phone.

In Shan State, a combined team, including the No. 22 anti-narcotic drug squad from Muse Town, intercepted a motorcycle driven by Han Maw, accompanied by Shanladwe, on the way to Mahnhaung Village Namkhan Township at 3 p.m. on 16 June. The police found 12 grams of heroin and 400 yaba pills in their possession.

Acting on the information provided by them, the combined team then raided Lawchat's house in Monwyet Village, Kaungkat Village-tract, Namkham Township. The police discovered heroin weighing 108 grams in nine cups, 2,800 yaba pills and Ks4,00,000.

At 5.30 p.m. on the same day, a combined team, including the No. 28 anti-narcotic drug squad from Kungtong Township, intercepted a motorcycle driven by Kyaw Hla and found 413 yaba pills in his bag. He was on the way to Wanpoud Village, Kungtong Township. Charges have been filed against all the offenders under the anti-narcotics act by the local police. – Myanmar News Agency ■

Bus catches fire; no casualties reported

A bus caught fire near Kwinchaung Yekyaw Bridge at milepost No. 125/3 on Shwebo-Myitkyina Road, 17 miles south of Indaw Township in Katha District, Sagaing Region, early Saturday morning.

The cause of the fire was reported to be excessive heat, because of which the bus's rear tyre burst.

The bus then caught fire. The accident occurred at around 5 a.m., when the bus was plying 32 passengers to Monywa from Myitkyina.

The fire was extinguished by Indaw Township Fire Service Department with the use of three fire engines and two water browsers. A farmer from Kwinchaung village who was irrigating his plantation also helped put out the fire.

No one was injured in the accident, according to firefighters.

The Township Fire Service Department and the police station have filed a case against the bus driver for reckless driving, according to the relevant sections of the Penal Code.—Han Myo Kyaw (IPRD) ■

Police seize 2,000 yaba pills in Kyaikmaraw Township

THE police arrested a man working at a rubber farm in Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State, after he was found in possession of a cache of yaba tablets on Saturday.

After receiving a tip, the anti-drug squad raided a house belonging to Ye Win, a farm worker at Uchaukpyit rubber plantation, near MCL cement plant in Gadonsi Village, on 16 June. They found a cache of 2,000 yaba pills hidden in a basket and confiscated the drugs.

The suspect has been charged with drug trafficking under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. The township police are carrying out further investigations to apprehend others involved in the case.—Township IPRD■

Yemen's government and its allies launched their offensive on Wednesday, with at least 139 combatants killed in the days since. **PHOTO: AFP**

UN envoy in Yemen for Hodeida crisis talks

SANAA — The UN envoy for Yemen was in rebel-controlled capital Sanaa for a second day Sunday to hold emergency talks over the key aid port of Hodeida, where a regional coalition is battling Huthi rebel fighters.

Martin Griffiths was believed to be pushing a deal for rebel leaders to cede control of the Red Sea port to a UN-supervised committee and halt heavy clashes against advancing government troops backed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The envoy did not make any statement on his arrival at Sanaa international airport on Saturday.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash on Twitter backed "the envoy's efforts to facilitate the safe handover of Hodeida to the legitimate Yemeni Government".

"The people of Hodeida urgently want to be liberated. The coalition will continue with its military and humanitarian preparations to achieve this urgent result," Gargash wrote.

More than 70 per cent of Yemeni imports pass through Hodeida's docks and the fighting has raised UN fears of humanitarian catastrophe in a country already teetering on the brink of famine.

Yemen's government and its allies launched their offensive on Wednesday, since when at least 139 combatants have been killed, according to medical and military sources.

The Shiite Huthi rebels have controlled the Hodeida region with its population of some 600,000 people since 2014.

Earlier this year, the Saudi-led coalition imposed a near-total blockade on the city's port alleging it was being used as a conduit for arms smuggling to the rebels by its regional arch rival Iran.

The capture of Hodeida would be the coalition's biggest victory of the war so far, and rebel leader Abdel Malek al-Huthi on Thursday called on his forces to put up fierce resistance and turn the region into a quagmire for coalition troops.

Hodeida airport

The Yemeni army on Saturday claimed it had seized control of the rebel base at Hodeida's disused airport, which has been closed since 2014.

An AFP correspondent on the front line could not confirm the report and a spokesman for the coalition, which has troops taking part in the offensive, did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

But military sources later denied that the army had entered the airport.

They told AFP, however, that sporadic clashes were underway at the airport's southern gate.

The highway between Hodeida and the government-held port of Mokha was also the scene of fighting, they said, adding that loyalist forces had suffered "losses".

The United Nations and relief organisations have warned that any all-out assault on Hodeida would put hundreds of thousands of people at risk.

The fighting is already nearing densely populated residential areas, the Norwegian Refugee Council warned, and aid distributions have been suspended in the west of the city.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said thousands were likely to flee if the fighting continued.

The World Health Organization called on all sides "to protect health workers and their facilities from harm, as well as to ensure unimpeded access for medical teams seeking to treat the wounded".

On Thursday, the UN Security Council demanded that Hodeida port be kept open to vital food shipments but stopped short of backing a Swedish call for a pause in the offensive to allow for talks on a rebel withdrawal.—AFP ■

Aquarius migrants finally land in Spain after week-long odyssey

VALENCIA — The 630 migrants whose rescue sparked a major migration row in Europe began disembarking in Spain on Sunday after a turbulent week that saw Italy turn them away.

The first of three ships transporting the group, an Italian coast guard vessel called the Datillo, pulled into Valencia harbour just before 6:30 am (0430 GMT) with 274 migrants on board, according to the Red Cross.

The Aquarius itself, the rescue ship chartered by a French NGO which has been at the centre of the crisis, pulled into port some four hours later under a clear blue sky at the port in southeastern Spain.

As it neared port, those on board had danced and sang, their excitement captured in footage released on Twitter by SOS Mediterranee which operates the vessel together with Doctors Without Borders (MSF). The third boat, the Italian navy ship the Orione, was due to arrive late on Sunday, regional authorities said.

After the first boat docked, medical staff wearing white overalls, gloves and masks went on board to carry out initial medical checks before the migrants disembarked in groups of 20. The migrants, most of them from Africa, were welcomed by a team of more than 2,000 people, including 470 translators and 1,000 Red Cross volunteers who distributed basic items such as blankets, clothes and hygiene kits.

High waves and winds had forced the naval convoy to take a detour on its 1,500-kilometre (930-mile) voyage to Spain, ending a week-long odyssey in the Mediterranean.

'Welcome home'

At the port, a huge banner was hung up saying "Welcome home" in various languages including Arabic.

"Today is a historic day," said Father Angel Garcia Rodriguez, a well-known priest who heads the Messengers of Peace NGO which is helping migrants at the port.

"It will be hard for Spaniards not to smile when they see these children disembark," he said.

Among the passengers are 450 men and 80 women — at least seven of them pregnant — as well as 89 adolescents and 11 children under the age of 13, figures released by the Valencian authorities show.

They come from 26 countries, mainly from Africa but also Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, MSF said.

Those with injuries -- mainly scratches and burns -- were taken to hospital along with the pregnant woman, local health officials said.

'Follow suit'

Red Cross Secretary General Elhadj As Sy thanked Spain "for opening their arms at times when many reject and are not showing solidarity."

"We call on all other countries to follow suit in helping those in need," he told AFP in Valencia.

The Aquarius rescued the migrants off Libya's coast last weekend but Italy's new populist government and Malta both refused to let it dock, accusing each other of failing to meet their humanitarian and EU commitments.

Spain eventually stepped in and agreed to receive the refugees as a "political gesture" to "oblige Europe to forge a common policy to a common problem," Foreign Minister Josep Borrell said.

Madrid on Saturday said it had accepted an offer from France — who had angered Rome by branding it irresponsible — to welcome Aquarius migrants who "meet the criteria for asylum". Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez thanked French President Emmanuel Macron for his gesture, saying it was "exactly the kind of cooperation Europe needs" at this hour.

'Voyages of death'

The plight of the Aquarius has again highlighted the failure of EU member states to work together to deal with the influx of migrant arrivals since 2015.

After Rome's decision to ban the Aquarius, Macron and Italian premier Giuseppe Conte met on Friday and agreed that the EU should set up asylum processing centres in Africa to prevent "voyages of death".—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 - (21-6-2018)(09:00)AM
EX-SITE HARDWOOD LOG ONLY
(22-6-2018)(09:00)A.M
YANGON &EX-SITE TEAKI/HARDWOOD (LOG AND CONVERSION)
(25-6-2018) (12:00)Noon
YANGON TEAK LOG ONLY

(b) COMMODITIES &VOLUME - TEAK LOGS ABOUT (1584) TONS
- TEAK CONVERSION ABOUT(258)TONS
HARDWOOD CONVERSION ABOUT(136)TONS
HARDWOOD LOGS **(2017-2018 EXTRACTION YEAR)**
PADAUK, PYINKADO, IN/KANYIN, THINWIN,
TAUNG THAYET,SAGAWA, INGYIN,THINGADU,
AUK CHINSA-NI
ABOUT(14480)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.myanmatimber. com.mm).
Contacts;Office Ph;01528771,
E-mail;marketing1ppy@gmail.com

OPEN TENDER COMMITTEE
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

When it comes to North Korea, no one puts Beijing in a corner

BEIJING — China may not have been at the table for Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un's historic summit, but it still scored a strategic victory and sent out a clear message: no one puts Beijing in the corner.

Just months earlier, it seemed as though the US might cut China out of its negotiations with the North altogether, as direct contact was established between Pyongyang and Washington.

But Beijing was not about to allow itself to be left out of the action on the Korean peninsula, where it has long claimed security and economic interests, and Chinese officials moved quickly to remind both the US and North Korea that Beijing was indispensable.

And after the summit, when Trump made the shock announcement that the US would stop its massive war games with South Korea — a longtime Chinese goal — it was clear that Beijing had made its mark on the proceedings.

The dramatic turnaround was further cemented when US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo rushed to the Chinese capital to brief President Xi Jinping and other top leaders on the Trump-Kim meeting.

"The results of the Singapore Summit are basically in line with China's expectations," said

Chinese officials have moved quickly to remind both the US and North Korea that Beijing was indispensable in negotiations with Pyongyang. **PHOTO: AFP**

Wu Xinbo, an expert on international relations at Shanghai's Fudan University. "The complete denuclearisation of the peninsula and the establishment of a peace mechanism for the peninsula are consistent with China's constant claims." That outcome made China "the strategic winner of the summit," according to one western diplomat, who asked for anonymity to discuss the sensitive subject.

Previously, "they would never have dreamed of Trump halting the joint manoeuvres with South Korea and mentioning possibly withdrawing troops from the South in the future."

Back in the game

Beijing's influence on the summit's outcome was far from a foregone conclusion.

For years, China has propped up the North Korean economy in the face of international pressure, worried about a possible collapse of the Kim regime, which it sees as a strategic buffer against the US military presence in South Korea.

But Beijing could not ignore Pyongyang's repeated nuclear and missile tests last year, and chose to support UN sanctions — cutting off the flow of coal, textiles, and other goods from North Korea.

With those concessions in hand, the US seemed intent on moving ahead without Beijing.

And when Trump announced in March his plan to meet Kim, it looked like Washington was planning to cut out the middleman and make a deal directly with Kim.

But China scrambled to put itself back in the game.

After years of being persona non grata, Kim suddenly made his first state visit to Beijing, closely followed by a second meeting with Xi in the Chinese port city of Dalian.

Up to that point, the North "really did not prioritise the ending of exercises by the US and South Korea," said Bonnie Glaser, senior Asia advisor at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"And then Xi Jinping met with Kim in Dalian and all of a sudden, we had an about face by the North Koreans."

The Dalian meeting last month was the second time the two leaders met in six weeks, following Kim's trip to Beijing.

"The whole thing looks to be not just a win for Kim, but also very much a win for Xi Jinping," she added.

"The Chinese have long believed that if they could actually dislodge US troops from the region that would be the key to eliminating or severely diminishing US influence in the region and accelerating the creation of a more China-centric region."

'Enormous power'

Following the Singapore summit, China has made it clear it intends to play a leading role in the negotiations, couching that insistence in diplomatic offers to lend its assistance.

The US likely has no choice but to play along.

"Ultimately, if there is to be a successful settlement between the US and (North) Korea, China has to be involved," said Charlie Parton, a former British diplomat in China now working at the UK-based think tank Royal United Services Institute (RUSI).

"You can't ignore an enormous power with a land border and a determination to make North Korea its business."

Wu agreed: "Without China's support, North Korea cannot safely promote denuclearisation and can't smoothly transfer the country's focus to economic development."

Now that China has successfully brought itself back into the negotiations, it could use its position for leverage in other areas of its relationship with the US, he said.

"We hope to treat political issues and economic issues separately, but if China and the US really open up a trade war, it will have an impact on the entire Sino-US relationship, including future Sino-US relations on the North Korea issue," Parton warned.

"It will inevitably make the coordination between the two countries on North Korea issue more complicated."—AFP ■

M4.6 earthquake hits Gunma north of Tokyo, no injuries reported

TOKYO — A magnitude 4.6 earthquake hit southern Gunma, an inland prefecture north of Tokyo, on Sunday, causing some property damage but no reports of injuries have been confirmed. The 3:27 p.m. quake, which occurred at a depth of 14 kilometers and posed no tsunami risk, registered lower 5 on the Japanese seismic intensity scale of 7 in Shibukawa in the prefecture, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. The quake broke windows at a gas station in Shibukawa. A worker at the gas station said he felt a vertical impact from below the ground at the time of the quake. The operation of bullet trains running through the prefecture was suspended following the quake but was resumed shortly afterward after no safety problems were detected. No abnormality was found at Japan Atomic Power Co.'s inactive Tokai No. 2 nuclear power plant in the village of Tokai in Ibaraki Prefecture, according to the prefectural government. The quake recorded 3 on the Japanese scale in parts of the prefecture. The government set up a liaison unit at the crisis management center of the prime minister's office to gather information on the temblor.—Kyodo News ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY.NO. (1008W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY.NO. (1008W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-6-2018 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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY.NO. ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TOVE MAERSK VOY.NO. ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-6-2018 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

New Yangon Development Company Limited (COI No. 1SC/2017-2018), invites eligible local and/or international consultants to indicate their interest in providing following consultancy -

1. Master Plan and Strategic Plan
2. Traffic and Transport Study
3. Strategic Environmental Assessment
4. Quantity Surveying (QS) Service

for the New Yangon City Development Project. Consultants passing the prequalification will be invited to prepare the proposals.

For further information, please contact below address between 9:00am to 4:00pm on 20 June 2018 and 21 June 2018.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the below address in one hard copy by 4:00pm on 26 June 2018.

New Yangon Development Company Limited
56, Chindwin Road, Kamayut Township, Yangon, Myanmar. nydc.com.mm Phone - 09402111525

Invest in North Korea: money pit or golden opportunity?

PYONGYANG (NORTH KOREA) — Donald Trump dangled the carrot of foreign investment in front of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at their nuclear summit, but analysts say few will want to put money into one of the highest-risk business environments in the world. The US president showed Kim a movie of bright lights, high-speed trains and soaring tower blocks — pitching a future that could be possible if Pyongyang gives up its weapons. Optimists say that with mineral wealth, cheap labour, and a helpful geographical location, the North has huge potential.

Optimists say that with mineral wealth, cheap labour, and a helpful geographical location, the North has huge potential. **PHOTO: AFP**

But the history of overseas firms who have tried to set up operations in the isolated, impoverished country is a long and sorry one. Rules that can change on a whim, bills that are never paid, and the threat of expropriation hang over foreigners who step into the wildest of wild east investment destinations.

For now, dozens of restrictions apply under the various sanctions regimes imposed on the North over its nuclear ambitions.

Joint ventures are banned by the UN Security Council, the European Union blocks financial transfers of more than 5,000 euros, and US regulations mean international banks are loath to enable transactions of any kind — so much so that even humanitarian organisations struggle to fund their activities.

And even if they are lifted, there are major challenges to working in the North. Infrastructure is poor, and analysts say corruption is widespread.

Crucially, said a diplomatic source in Pyongyang, "legal guarantees for business are very weak".

'Huge cultural gaps'

During the Sunshine Policy, a previous period of warmer ties, South Korean conglomerate Hyundai poured hundreds of millions of dollars into a tourist resort for Southerners to visit the scenic Mount Kumgang.

But the trips came to an abrupt halt when a North Korean soldier shot dead a woman from the South who strayed into a forbidden zone.

Many South Korean firms set up operations in the joint-venture Kaesong Industrial Complex where they employed cheap labour from the North, but Seoul closed the project in 2016 over Pyongyang's weapons programmes.

Egyptian telecom firm Orascom poured hundreds of millions of dollars into setting up the North's first mobile phone network, Koryolink, only for the government to set up a rival operator of its own.

The company was also unable to get its money out.

"I am taking all the hits," Orascom's billionaire owner Naguib Sawiris told Bloomberg last month. "I am being paid in a currency that doesn't get exchanged very easily, I have put a lot of money and built a hotel and did a lot of good stuff there."

Construction giant LafargeHolcim last year disposed of its stake in a North Korean cement plant for an undisclosed sum, nursing significant losses.

"Governance is weak, information is lacking and there are huge cultural gaps with local partners," said Geoffrey See, founder of Choson Exchange, a non-profit that trains entrepreneurs and economic policymakers in the North.

The most successful foreign firms in the North, he added, focus on trading activities to avoid having assets in the country that are vulnerable to seizure.— AFP ■

INVITATION FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PROPOSALS
THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
China-aided Pilot Project of Poverty Reduction Cooperation in Myanmar
CONSULTING FIRM FOR PROJECT BASELINE SURVEY AND M & E

The Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation as implementation agency (IA) of Myanmar, is jointly implementing the China-aided Pilot Project of Poverty Reduction Cooperation in Myanmar with the grant provided by the Chinese Government. The project aims to share China's successful experiences in poverty reduction and to enhance cooperation and exchange in poverty reduction and rural development between China and Myanmar by conducting poverty alleviation activities in two rural villages in the Nay Pyi Taw territory.

The Joint Project Management Office (JPMO) intends to apply part of the financing to recruit a qualified local Consulting Firm or Chinese Consulting Firm with branches in Myanmar to provide the services for project baseline survey and M&E in the two project villages and the two comparative villages.

The services shall include baseline survey in 2018 and comprehensive M&E works for the villages for 3 years starting from 2018 to 2020. The assignment is expected to start in July 2018. The TOR including detailed tasks and deliverables to be provided under the services can be obtained through the address mentioned hereunder.

The Joint Project Management Office (JPMO) now invites eligible Firms/ Companies/ NGOs to submit the technical and financial proposals.
The Proposals must be submitted in scanned/PDF version or in sealed envelope by person to the address below by 16:00 PM Wednesday 4 July 2018.

Attn:

U Ye Khaung, Deputy Director
Joint Project Management Office (JPMO), Department of Rural Development,
Office No.36, Nay Pyi Taw.
Tel: +95-67418619
Fax: (+95-67418617)
E-mail: chinamyanmarjpmo@gmail.com

PACIFIC HUNT ENERGY

Pacific Hunt Energy Completes Seismic Acquisition for Dry Season 2017-2018 on PSC H

Pacific Hunt Energy (PHE), a Canadian oil & gas company, has safely acquired 230 line kilometres of 2D land seismic data on onshore PSC H in Bago Region with its seismic contractor BGP Geophysical Myanmar. Pacific Hunt Energy has started the processing, and interpretation of a 2D seismic data set. The data acquired is of good quality and the project was completed with zero lost time injuries. "The project was successful and we are happy with the results", said Grant Petersen, Managing Director of Pacific Hunt Energy. The Company has further seismic acquisition plans scheduled for the next dry season.

Prior to commencement and during the seismic campaign PHE conducted extensive public consultations with thousands of stakeholders in five townships of Bago Region namely, Bago, Daik U, Kyauktaga, Thanet Pin and Waw townships. Land and Crop compensation payment ceremonies are ongoing under the supervision of local authorities and MOGE. As part of its CSR campaign, Pacific Hunt Energy has completed a three-month long mobile clinic program. A doctor together with two health care assistants provided free medical services in the villages located in the proximity of the seismic lines. During the CSR campaign over 2,800 people visited the mobile clinic and received good quality treatment for a variety of diagnoses such as muscular pain, hypertension and gastrointestinal issues. Health talks during which visitors to the clinic could learn about liver health and how to improve liver health in their daily lives, were held by the treating doctor during clinic opening hours. The health talks were part of a Liver Campaign which focused on identifying those in risk groups and testing them for liver abnormalities such as Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. Further Pacific Hunt Energy CSR campaigns with focus on schools and clean drinking water are currently under execution and will continue to be implemented during 2018-2019.

Pacific Hunt Energy was awarded onshore blocks PSC H and PSC C-1 as a result of the Second Onshore Bidding Round in Myanmar in 2014. The Company began its first seismic campaign on PSC H in Myanmar in the last quarter of 2017.

For more information visit: www.pacifichuntenergy.com
Or contact us at: info@pacifichuntenergy.com

For feedback about our seismic or CSR campaign please contact Pacific Hunt Energy Community Call Centre at: 09 401 146 388

Naomi Campbell and Monica Bellucci light up Milan fashion week

PARIS— Iconic supermodel Naomi Campbell and Italian star Monica Bellucci on Saturday injected Hollywood-octane oomph in to the second day of Milan men's fashion week, sporting sizzling men's suits teamed with skyscraper stilettos for Dolce&Gabbana.

With an over-the-top gilt and baroque decor glittering in the background, the 48-year-old Campbell was a vision from top to bottom from her elegant black hat with a white band to her sparkling silver heels. She wore a classic pinstripe suit with a carefully mismatched bow tie adorning her crisp white shirt.

The catwalk celebrated love in all shapes and sizes -- heterosexual, gay, couples with children, cougars and sugar daddies — sending women and men, women and women, men and men, women and toy boys and older men and their trophy conquests down the ramp in eye-popping colours screaming Florida.

Bellucci showed off a three-piece coal black suit with a wide lapel, teetering on vertiginous heels with her hands in her pockets.

Campbell and Bellucci pose with designers Domenio Dolce and Stefano Gabbana. **PHOTO: AFP**

The younger models were heartthrobs of the Millennials — a target group for the house -- including actor Cameron Dallas, Chinese singer and actor Karry Wang and Kailand Wander, the son of US music legend Stevie Wonder.

Apart from Campbell and Bellucci's suits, the other offerings bore the quirky, sassy D&G stamp: suits encrusted with precious stones or layered with dazzling silver and gold embroidery that the maison put down to a "Gothic inspiration."

Snakes motifs and neon shades

Versace also opted for full-blast — but far younger — star power, leading with current top model Bella Hadid. Both the boys and girls wore outfits bearing the brand's trademark snake motif, as well as head-to-toe fluorescent green and pink combinations.

Trousers were in plaid and shorts were both baggy or tight and some were asymmetrical. There were letter box red cardigans emblazoned with a crown and Donatella Versace said the collection catered to three kinds of men: a "street style" for stars, another for dandies and a third for "leaders." "The Versace man is not ordinary, he is watched and spoken of," she said.

Milan will showcase 28 ready-to-wear collections to reveal the Spring-Summer 2019 lines.

Among the major Italian names showing between now and Monday are Versace, Dolce&Gabbana, Prada and Giorgio Armani.

The overseas fashion houses taking part include Britain's Stella McCartney, Canada's Dsquared2 and Germany's Philipp Plein.

McCartney is returning to Milan after a four-year absence and will close the fashion week on Monday evening.— AFP ■

What we learned from Jay-Z, Beyonce album

NEW YORK— Jay-Z and Beyonce late Saturday released "Everything is Love," a surprise album after years of speculation that they were working on a joint project.

The album — which came two years after Beyonce revealed Jay-Z's infidelity through lyrics — again offers plenty of tidbits into the lives of music's most famous couple.

Here are some highlights:

No love child

Jay-Z shot down rumors that he has an illegitimate child. Aspiring rapper Rymir Satterthwaite has alleged for years that he is the superstar's son due to his mother's purported fling with the then little-known Shawn Carter in 1992.

"Billie Jean in his prime / For the thousandth time / The kid ain't mine," Jay-Z raps on "Heard About Us," referencing Michael Jackson's classic song about a paternity case.

Jay-Z and Beyonce's six-year-old daughter Blue Ivy separately makes an appearance on the album and says "hello" to her twin siblings Rumi and Sir, who turned one on Thursday.

Beyonce and Jay-Z perform during a 2016 concert at the Wolstein Center in Cleveland, Ohio. **PHOTO: AFP**

Recovered from infidelity

"Everything is Love," as the title implies, speaks much about the strength of their marriage after highly public troubles.

Beyonce on her 2016 album "Lemonade" revealed infidelity by Jay-Z, who apologized a year later on his own album "4:44."

On the joint album's boisterous closer "Lovehappy," the two say that they have patched up.

"You did some things to me / You do some things to me," Beyonce sings with brass in her voice. "But love is deeper than your pain and I believe you can change."

Angry at legal action

Jay-Z vents frustration several times on the album about legal action against him. Most recently the Securities and Exchange Commission ordered the rapper to testify as part of an investigation into his sale of his Rocawear clothing line.

On "Nice," Jay-Z denounces the subpoena and suggests he is being targeted because he is a successful African American, wondering why he did not face such scrutiny in his earlier life as a Brooklyn drug dealer.

"Time to remind me I'm black again, huh? / All this talking back. I'm too arrogant, huh?"

Later on the album he professes his innocence in disputes with authorities -- so often known by their agencies' acronyms -- as he raps: "I pass the alphabet boys like an eye test."

No to Super Bowl

Jay-Z appeared to confirm a report that he turned down an offer from the National Football League to perform at this year's Super Bowl, the most watched event on US television.

Jay-Z is an outspoken supporter of Colin Kaepernick, the now-unemployed quarterback who stirred a nationwide discussion by kneeling during the national anthem to protest racial injustice. He alludes to the racial imbalance in American football, where team owners are almost entirely white and players mostly African American.

"I said no to the Super Bowl / You need me, I don't need you," Jay-Z raps.

"Every night we in the endzone / Tell the NFL we in stadiums, too."— AFP ■

Japan Embassy's 2nd Secretary transfers data for libray in Letpadan

SECOND Secretary of the Embassy of Japan Mr. Iwase Keita transferred data at a ceremony to mark the opening of a school library at Kyay Ni Basic Education Affiliated High School in Letpadan Township, Bago Region, on Friday.

During the ceremony, Township Administrator U Zaw Moe Aung and Township Education Officer Daw Aye Aye Than delivered speeches, followed by discussions by Mr. Iwase Keita, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, and Mr. Aki San, Director of Shanti Volunteer Association, on the purpose of providing support to school libraries.

Mr. Iwase Keita hands over the signboard commemorating the donors' names to the headmistress Daw Mya Mya Htwe. **PHOTO: MG SHWE WIN (PYAY)**

Later, Daw Mya Mya Htwe, headmistress of the school, gave a note of thanks, followed by officials cutting a ribbon to mark the opening of the library.

Mr. Iwase Keita then handed over the signboard commemorating the donors' names to the headmistress.

The ceremony was attended by educational officers and teachers, led by U Zaw Moe Aung and Daw Aye Aye Than, together with parents of the school children.— Mg Shwe Win (Pyay) ■

Pyay Town awards new generation writers in short story competition

Next generation writers received awards for competing in a short story competition held by Pyay Township Writer Association at a ceremony in Yan Aung Mingala Kinn Pagoda in Pyay Town.

Maung Paing Zay Min Tun who got the second prize in the competition received his award from Chairman Dr. Yin Wai Lwin.— 017 ■

Embracing difference, Tokyo short film is a picture of inclusion

TOKYO — The scene: Tokyo. The plot: an Australian fan of Shakespeare with Down syndrome who sets out on a solo adventure to discover the city and escape the watchful eyes of his domineering older brother.

"Shakespeare in Tokyo" is the latest film by Australian director Genevieve Clay-Smith, a project she says aimed to open doors for the inclusion of marginalized groups in the filmmaking process.

The film casts Australian actor Gerard O'Dwyer in the lead role, alongside Japanese actors Sonny Chiba and Shioli Kutsuna, as well as participants in a workshop geared at people with Down syndrome that prepared them to be part of the film-making process.

O'Dwyer, who has Down syndrome and is from Sydney, Australia, was awarded best male actor at the Tropfest Film Festival for his role in "Be My Brother" in 2009. He was nominated for best actor at St. Kilda Film Festival for "The Interviewer" in 2013.

"When I first met (O'Dwyer), he recited the entire balcony scene from Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet' and I knew that he could do it, he could be an actor," Clay-Smith recalled in a recent interview with Kyodo News in Tokyo. "It's so easy to be inclusive. If I can do it in the film industry, we can do anywhere," she said. Several months earlier, a group of colorfully clad people had gathered at a studio in Tokyo for the workshop in preparation for this month's Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia in Japan.

Kenta Abe, 30, was among six Japanese with Down syndrome with acting or other stage experience taking part in the workshop. Abe appeared in the film as an extra.

Clay-Smith has won over 50 international awards for her films, including the Audience Award for "The Interviewer" at the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia in 2013.

"I enjoyed it very much," said Abe after the workshop, saying he was "nervous at first" but relaxed later and was able to look forward to the filming.

O'Dwyer came to the three-hour workshop, where Clay-Smith, an actor herself, explained about makeup, costumes and other aspects of the filmmaking process.

"Filmmaking is not just about turning on cameras," she told the participants. She explained the film's story, its lessons and issues each character faced. The film was shot at various venues in Tokyo, including Shibuya and Hama-rikyu Gardens.

The roughly 20-minute film takes the audience through the Japanese capital as O'Dwyer, playing the part of Ben, escapes his brother to view the city on his own, encountering various people and attractions while also offering the people he meets his own perspective.

The film was created under a project sponsored by the Tokyo government for a special screening at the annual Short Shorts Film Festival and for the promotion of the city's tourism. The Tokyo film festival, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, runs through 24 June.

As the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games approach, Japan has pledged to become a more "inclusive society." Some experts believe the film can help educate people about inclusiveness across a range of disabilities ahead of these major international events.

"The Paralympics tend to draw people's attention to those with physical disabilities, but the film is great in that it allowed people with intellectual disabilities to be a part," said Mayumi Mitogawa, a board member of the Japan Down Syndrome Society, who was involved in the project.

JDS is a nonprofit organization helping people with Down syndrome, also known as trisomy 21, and their families. It has around 6,000 members.

Australian filmmaker Genevieve Clay-Smith poses at a studio in Tokyo on 14 January 2018, ahead of her filming "Shakespeare in Tokyo" for the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia in Tokyo. She has been holding film workshops for people with Down Syndrome and her latest film involves actors and crew members with the genetic disorder. **PHOTO : KYODO NEWS**

Mitogawa said the workshop made it easier for participants to get involved in filmmaking and hopes the Japanese film industry will allow other people with disabilities to have such experiences.

"Although we cannot make direct comparisons, Japan is still behind other countries (in being inclusive), so we hope the film will serve as a catalyst to bring about change," Mitogawa said, adding that introducing foreign culture to Japan through O'Dwyer's character also offers an enlightening perspective.

Those with disabilities have faced severe discrimination in Japan in the past, particularly under the eugenics protection law, which authorized the sterilization of people with mental disabilities and illness or hereditary disorders to prevent the birth of "inferior" offspring. It also allowed for forcible abortions.

The legislation, which drew on a similar Nazi Germany law, was scrapped in 1996 and replaced by the maternal protection law on abortions, but people who have been subjected to forcible sterilization have recently come forward to file lawsuits against the state in a sign of social change.—Kyodo News ■

Royal Thanlyin FC to step up to MNL I

After completion of the Week-10 matches of the Myanmar National League (MNL) II 2018, Royal Thanlyin FC could be promoted to MNL I by earning a total of 18 points after playing eight matches with five wins and three draws.

Dagon FC is placed second with a total of 13 points, having played nine matches with three wins, four draws and two losses.

University FC is in the third place with two wins, six draws and one loss, while Kachin United FC is in the fourth place with 12 points through three wins, three draws and two losses.

Meanwhile, Mawyawadi FC and Silver Stars FC are placed in the fourth and fifth places with nine points each.

Mountain Lion FC stands in the bottom-most place with five points.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Yangon trounces Zwekapin 2-0 in MNL

Yangon United beat Zwekapin United 2-0 in the Myanmar National League (MNL) match yesterday.

Yangon United lined up with captain-cum-keeper Kyaw Zin Htet, Yan Lin Aung, Maung Maung Lwin, Nan Wai Min, Kyaw Zin Oo, Kosuke Yamazaki, Htoo Khant Lwin, Aee Soe, Zaw Min Tun, Kekere Moikailon and Emmanuel.

Zwekapin United team comprised captain-cum-keeper Naing Zeyyar Tun, Doe Sacjue, Phyo Mg Mg Saw, Than Htet Aung, Pulgarin Edison, Zon Moe Aung, Zin Min Tun, Anderson, Nyi Nyi Tun, Thiha Htet Aung and Thet Lwin Win.

As the Zwekapin players seemed exhausted from their previous matches, Yangon kept Zwekapin on their toes with a speedy display. Yangon scored the first goal in the 30th minute through Maung Maung Lwin.

At the end of the first half, Yangon led 1-0.

Zwekapin played better in the second half. Though Zwekapin got some scoring opportunities in the later minutes, the Yangon defence line was too strong for them to breach.

Yangon got the second goal through Aee Soe at the 84th-minute mark. With the win, Yangon leads the table with 35 points, and Zwekapin United stands at the 8th place with 20 points.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

World Cup holders Germany crash to Mexico defeat

MOSCOW — Defending champions Germany crashed to the first defeat in their opening game of a World Cup since 1982 as Hirving Lozano's clinical finish earned Mexico a shock 1-0 victory on Sunday.

The highly-rated PSV Eindhoven forward struck the winner on 35 minutes after a blistering counter-attack at the Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow as Mexico beat Germany for just the second time in history.

Germany's preparations for the tournament were plagued by poor results and controversy, and their problems were magnified in the Russian capital, leaving their proud record of never being eliminated in the group stage of a World Cup already in danger.

Joachim Loew started eight of the nine 2014 World Cup winners in his squad, with Mesut Ozil returning from a knee injury and Manuel Neuer back in goal following his lengthy absence for the Group F clash.

Jerome Boateng's build-up to the finals was also hampered by a groin injury, but the Bayern Munich centre-back was on the alert inside 60 seconds to thrust himself desperately in front of a Lozano effort.

A remarkably open start saw Timo Werner sprint in behind the Mexico defence before dragging across the face of goal, while Mats Hummels shot straight at Guillermo Ochoa after a botched clearance.

Neuer held well twice in quick succession, first from a long-range Hector Herrera strike and then again to keep out Hector Moreno's header, as Mexico attacked the Germany backline with regularity.

Carlos Salcedo nearly diverted a teasing cross into his own net, while Timo Werner hit tamely at Ochoa when an umarked Julian Draxler appeared the better option.

Mexico continued to threaten, Miguel Layun narrowly unable to latch onto a through ball, but their goal arrived 10 minutes before the break as Germany were again sliced apart.

Hirving Lozano scored the goal that stunned Germany. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kroos rattled crossbar

After Sami Khedira lost possession, Javier Hernandez triggered a lightning counter before finding a charging Lozano, who cut inside a covering Ozil and lashed low inside Neuer's near post to spark deafening roars from the sizeable Mexico support.

Germany hit back, Toni Kroos rattling the crossbar with a 25-yard free-kick that needed the fingertips of a scrambling Ochoa to keep it out, but Mexico barely clung on to their advantage.

Marco Reus was introduced on the hour as Loew sought to invigorate a struggling side, while 39-year-old Rafael Marquez became just the third player to feature at five World Cups as he was brought on the tighten Mexico's defence.

Joshua Kimmich's acrobatic overhead kick looped onto the roof of the net, with substitute Edson Alvarez then blocking bravely to thwart Draxler.

Reus also hammered a volley over from a narrow angle before a frenetic finale saw Julian Brandt, just on for Werner, smack the outside of the post with a thunderous effort from 20 yards.

One desperate last attack had Neuer come up for a corner, but a towering header from the veteran Marquez and subsequent claim from Ochoa allowed Mexico to close out an unforgettable triumph.—AFP ■