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in Picture

Ethnic Literature & Culture Development Festival in Taunggyi

A Shan ethnic woman performs a traditional dance at the Ethnic Literature and Culture Development Festival in Taunggyi, Shan State yesterday. The five-day event organised by the Ministry of Information and the Shan State Government began on 21st March. Papers on literature and the culture of ethnic tribes were shared at the festival. **PHOTO: TAUNGGYI IPRD**

Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs visits Maungtaw

A delegation led by Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Iwao Horii, accompanied by Rakhine State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Col. Phone Tint and Rakhine State Government Secretary U Tin Maung Swe, arrived in Maungtaw town yesterday afternoon and viewed the preparations being made for the redevelopment of the Maungtaw region to receive the returnees.

The delegation visited the Hla Pho Khaung Transit Centre and inspected the status of the building being constructed to temporarily house the returnees, as well as the availability of water, electricity and sanitation facilities.

The construction of the Hla Pho Khaung Transit Centre is more than 75 per cent complete and can house more than 25,000 persons. Once it is fully completed, it will accommodate more than 30,000, as well as provide housing, food, water, electricity and healthcare.

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Myanmar rejects draft resolution on human rights

THE draft resolution entitled "Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar" tabled by the European Union (EU) was considered for action on 23 March 2018 during the 37th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

During the discussion, Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations Ambassador U Htin Lynn delivered a statement before taking action on the draft resolution, and categorically rejected the draft resolution highlighting paragraphs which are highly intrusive and directly challenging to the state sovereignty of Myanmar.

He also updated the meeting of the progress being made on the ground and underlined factually and technically flawed paragraphs in the draft resolution.

In his statement, the Permanent Representative stressed that Myanmar, as a young democracy, has been facing challenges in its march to a democratic society. However, such challenges will not derail the Government's efforts in national reconciliation, peace, development and promotion and protection of human rights.

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Artist Dr. Lun Gywe donates oil painting to MRTV

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint accepts the oil painting from Dr. Lun Gywe. **PHOTO: MNA**

ARTIST Dr. Lun Gywe donated an oil painting to Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) at the MRTV meeting hall on Pyay Road in Yangon yesterday.

Dr. Lun Gywe painted a picture depicting the Myanmar song "Myittar Ingyin Ya Gone" (flower house of metta or loving-kindness), as a message of peace.

At the event, Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint expressed thanks for the donation.

For his part, Dr. Lun Gywe said, "The painting was created to depict the 'Myittar Ingyin Ya Gone' song. I wanted to contribute through my professional skills and did it out of love and for peace in the nation."

Also, music composer Alinkar Kyaw Swar Hinthada U Myint Ngwe said, "Artist Dr. Lun Gywe painted the picture depicting my composition, entitled, 'Myittar Ingyin Ya Gone.' I composed this song 52 years ago, based on an article about a deer, a tiger and an archer (hunter) living peacefully in a forest full of flowers. It is also based it on my own experiences. This song will always be useful at a time when the country is striving towards peace. I composed this song in an artistically small way to help our nation. The message is that peace will prevail when people love each other and show kindness."

Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint accepted the oil painting and, in return, presented Dr. U Lun Gywe with a certificate of honour.

Director-General of MRTV U Myint Htwe also expressed words of thanks.

Present at the meeting were Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun, departmental officers and officials, artist Dr. Lun Gywe's wife, artist Daw Lun Mya Mya, and artist U Hla Tin Tun. —Myanmar News Agency ■

Mr. Iwao Horii talks to officials as he witnesses reconstruction of houses in Pantawpyin village. **PHOTO: MNA**

Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs visits Maungtaw

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Vice-Minister Mr. Iwao Horii travelled to Shwezar Village and met with local villagers. Shwezar Village was not involved in terrorist acts, and people of various races and religions live here peacefully, while working primarily in the agriculture and fishery sectors.

Later, the vice-minister visited the Maungtaw District General Administration Department office and met with those Hindu women who were reportedly abducted from the country and taken to Bangladesh.

Following this, the vice-minister visited Pantawpyin Village to view the reconstruction of houses there.

During his Maungtaw trip, Vice-Minister Mr. Iwao Horii said Japan will help in the resettlement processes and support both Myanmar and Bangladesh in assisting the returnees. — Kyaw Thu Htat ■

Spokesman: No speech made by Acting President U Myint Swe

U ZAW HTAY, the spokesperson for the President's Office, said yesterday that Acting President U Myint Swe didn't deliver a message or speech, as was stated widely on social media, terming the claim "fake news".

"In the social media network, it was titled as the first message to the people by the Acting President. The message was also said to contain the assertion of what sort of people ought to be selected as a President. The message was reportedly said to have been delivered during the time when the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw was preparing to select the President. The Acting President returned from Morocco last week and didn't meet with the public nor deliver a speech. There is no announcement in state-owned media about the Acting President delivering a speech to the public. As this news was reported widely in the social media, I'm denying this in order to prevent the people from having any doubt about it", said Director General U Zaw Htay, the spokesperson for the President's Office.

According to the 2008 Constitution, the first Vice President becomes the Acting President whenever the President's position becomes vacant due to death, when the President is permanently unable to perform his duties or when he resigns before the expiry of his term. The first Vice President is the person who received the second highest number of votes during the presidential election. Vice President U Myint Swe is currently serving as Acting President after the resignation last week of U Htin Kyaw. The constitution dictates that a new president should be selected by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in seven days time.

Investigations are being conducted to expose who disseminated the false news and appropriate action will be taken according to the law, it was learnt.

"We are investigating the (social media) account owner who spread this news", U Zaw Htay said. — Myanmar News Agency ■

BGB holds coordination meeting at MRTV

A COORDINATION meeting of the Ministry of Information's Broadcasting Governing Body (BGB) was held at the meeting hall of Myanmar Radio and Television's (MRTV's) office in Yangon yesterday morning.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Information Dr. Pe Myint said MRTV will work with radio and television broadcasting entities to continue developing the sector in Myanmar.

Also, Ministry of Information's BGB Chairman Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun, MRTV Director-General U Myint Htway and other departmental officials explained the work being done by MRTV.

Later, officials from radio and television broadcasting explained their work requirements with the Union Minister.

Later in the afternoon Union Minister Dr. Pe Myint together with Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun met with News and Periodicals Enterprise Managing Director, chief editors and editorial department members to discuss about raising the quality of State owned newspapers. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Golden umbrella hoisted atop Kyaikpaung Pagoda in Paung, Mon State

A CEREMONY to hoist the diamond bud, vane and golden umbrella onto the Kyaikpaung Pagoda in Paung Town, Mon State, was held yesterday morning, with Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko in attendance.

At the ceremony, the Union Minister and members of the public took the Nine Precepts from Mon State Sanghanayaka Committee trustee and leading patron Sayadaw of Mawlamyine Town, Phet Tan ward Abaya Thuta monastery Maha Saddhamma Jotika Gandavasaka Pandita Bhaddanta Sasana.

Also, Mon State, Paung Township Sanghanayaka Committee Vice-Chairman Phayagyi, monastery leading patron Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sandaw Batha delivered a sermon and Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Mani Jotadara Dr. Khin Shwe explained about Sasana matters.

Afterwards, Mon State, Bilin Township, Kyaikhtihsaung Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadaja Dr. Bhaddanta Naganeda gave a sermon for donations and the audience shared merit through the pouring of water.

Following this, donations of dried rations (including rice) were made to 108 sanghas by Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Mon State Chief Minister Dr. Aye Zan, State government member minister for social affairs Dr. Htein Lin, Department of Religious Affairs Director General U Myint Oo, the Buddhist Association for the Promotion of Theravada Buddhism in Border Regions Chairman Wunna Kyaw Htin Dr. Khin Shwe, regional administrative organisations, related officials and guests.

Union Minister and officials then paid homage to Paung Town, Phayagyi monastery Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sandaw Batha and donated offerings. From Paung Towns, the Union Minister and officials went on to Mawlamyine Town, Pariyatti Beikman to pay homage to sanghas sitting for the Dhamma Cariya examination and made cash donations to the exam center. — Myanmar News Agency ■

Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister witnesses repatriation readiness

A DELEGATION led by Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Iwao Horii toured the Hla Pho Khaung Transit Centre and met with local people here yesterday afternoon.

Mr. Iwao Horii had a meeting with the Rakhine ethnic people, as well as Hindus and Muslims in Maungtaw, and asked them about the progress being made to provide them with accommodations.

Along with the Hla Pho Khaung Transit Centre, the delegation also viewed the construction project undertaken to assist the Mro race.

While speaking with journalists, Mr. Iwao Horii said, "I have come here to witness the situation in the Maungtaw region and assess what kind of assistance can be provided by the Japanese government.

I learnt that people belonging to various races, including the Rakhine ethnic people, Hindus and Muslims, are living peacefully in this region. Therefore, peaceful coexistence is of great importance to maintain stability in the region."

Being a friendly nation, the Japanese government will provide assistance, wherever necessary, to both Myanmar and Bangladesh, and will assist in the process of repatriation, while creating employment opportunities and providing education to the returnees. "Moreover, we will help restore peace and stability in the region and try to assist in the regional development," he said. The Japanese government will offer emergency assistance and also help in the repatriation and resettlement of people who fled the country.

Further, Japan will help the Myanmar government carry out a variety of proposals for the Rakhine State. —Kyaw Thu Win ■

Japan's Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Iwao Horii meets local people at the Hla Pho Khaung Transit Centre in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: AYE MIN THU**

New buildings for Shan State Hluttaw and government opened

THE new buildings for the Shan State parliament and government office were opened yesterday at Eaindaw Street, Thit Taw ward in Taunggyi, Shan State.

Dr. Lin Htut, Chief Minister for Shan State, and U Sai Lone Seng, Speaker of the Shan State Hluttaw, opened the ceremony by pressing a button to unveil the sign board of the buildings.

Six other top senior officials from the parliament and the cabinet cut a ribbon for the opening ceremony of the building.

As a separate ceremony, six ministers for ethnic affairs cut ribbons for the opening ceremony of the building of Shan State government.

Then, they sprinkled ceremonial water on the sign boards of the parliament and the cabinet, and the memorial inscription for the buildings.

The construction of the new buildings was started in January 2017, and they are not far from the old buildings that are located on Bogyoke Aung San Road in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State. —Shan State IPRD ■

The opening ceremony of the Shan State parliament and government's Office held in Taunggyi, Shan State yesterday. **PHOTO: MYANMAR DIGITAL NEWS**