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Monday, 5 August 2019

Union Minister attends RCEP intersessional meet in Beijing



Union Minister U Thaung Tun poses for photos together with other attendees at the 8th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Intersessional Ministerial Meeting in Beijing on 3 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, U Thaung Tun who led the Myanmar delegation to the 8th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Intersessional Ministerial Meeting in Beijing, China 2-3 August 2019, arrived back in Yangon yesterday.

When signed, the RCEP comprising the 10 – member states of ASEAN and six of its

free – trade agreement partners — China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand and India — will be the world's biggest regional trade agreement. It will cover nearly half of the world's population, a third of the global economy and more than a greater of cross-country trade. According to the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, the Beijing meeting

marked an important milestone. It achieved good progress in the negotiations and found ways to move forward on some outstanding issues. The Minister said the negotiations in the months ahead will be critical for the RCEP to become a reality.

Union Minister U Thaung Tun underlined that it is important for the negotiating countries to exercise maximum flex-

ibility to resolve outstanding issues. He said the deal was 80 percent completed but that there were a number of sticking points such as tariff reductions.

The RCEP negotiations started in 2013 but progress has been slow as the free-trade agreement would cover 16 countries at different phases of economic development, pushing for different standards.

— MNA ■

Myanma Timber Enterprise to cut annual logging quota by half

THE Myanma Timber Enterprise will reduce the annual limit for logging of teak and hardwood by up to 50 per cent, and produce only enough timber to meet the cost of production during the 2019-2020 logging season.

The Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, U Ohn Win, made the remarks at the coordination meeting of the Myanma Timber Enterprise (MTE) yesterday at its head office in Insein Township of Yangon Region.

He said the MTE will reduce logging activities in natural forests as far as it can, and will only cut down trees aged 30 years and above in Mandalay and Sagaing regions, in accordance with the rules set by the Forest Department.

The Union Minister spoke of the need to ensure the natural environment is not damaged during the logging process and to block old timber production routes for prevention of illegal logging. He said they will replant triple amount of fallen trees in a region in developing high-valued plantations.

The Union Minister gave instructions to open additional elephant camps to ensure families adequate financial support for working elephants, the mahouts and their families after the reduction in logging from the Union policy.

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MoHT, MoHS collaborate on tourism development

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism, U Ohn Maung, inspected the preparations for ASEAN Food Festival 2019 in Mandalay on 2 August.

The Union Minister gave instructions to ensure the traditional cuisine is healthy and up to international standards, and the exhibition booths are organized efficiently.

Next, the Union Minister visited the classroom of the foundation course for Japanese language level N5 opened at the Bagan Information Training Center, with assistance from the ministry, at the old city of Bagan.

The course is conducted for 12 weeks from 22 July to 11 October and currently has 41 trainees from travel agencies in Bagan and tourism police offices.

Later in the evening, the Union Minister attended the conference on the Ministry of Hotels

and Tourism's digital marketing, held at Tharapar Hotel in Bagan, together with the Union Minister for Health and Sports, Dr Myint Htwe.

Speaking at the event, U Ohn Maung said all travel organizations need to cooperate with the ministry to develop both the travel industry in Bagan and the hotels and tourism industry across the nation.

He said they have formed subnational tourism committees and are working towards decentralization of the regional travel industry. He said they are utilizing digital marketing to promote the industry and encouraged all affiliated organizations to partake in the ministry's projects.

Dr Myint Htwe also delivered an address where he said it is important to aim for sustainability systematic order in the development process. He said



Union Minister U Ohn Maung gives instructions on preparations for ASEAN Food Festival 2019.

PHOTO: MNA

it is necessary to ensure health protection and hygienic food to foreign travellers entering the nation. He invited relevant or-

ganizations to cooperate with the two ministries to promote sport tourism. Afterwards, the digital marketing team leader presented

the completed and ongoing processes of their team and attendees provided suggestions.—MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Mini dams built for flood prevention, water supply in Rakhine State



The Yoetayok Dam in Ponnagyun Township is preventing floods during the monsoon and supply water during the summer. PHOTO: HAN MIN

THE Rakhine State branch of the Department of Irrigation and Water Utilization Management (IWUMD) built the Yoetayok Dam in Ponnagyun Township in the fiscal year 2018-2019.

The dam near Yotayok village is one of the dams the department built in Rakhine State for preventing floods during the monsoons and supplying water during the summer.

"We are building dams in the state to prevent floods in the rainy season and store water for summer use. We are also building embankments and sluiceways to halt the flow of sea water into cultivation fields. Additionally, we

are conducting proper maintenance of the existing facilities," said U Kyaw Naing Oo, Director of IWUMD.

Located 1.5 miles west of Yotayok village, the Yoetayok Dam is an earth type facility. The average volume of water inflow is 116 million gallons. It has a maximum storage capacity of 69.10 million gallons of which 64.68 million gallons can be supplied for various purposes.

"The Yotayok Dam can supply enough drinking water for 5878 persons of 1253 households of nearby villages and for farm and draft animals and can prevent flood during the rainy

season," he added. Although Rakhine State gets about 200 inches of rain annually, the summer heat dries up many of the streams, lakes and wells, especially in the rural areas. So many places of the state face water shortage during the summer. But in the rainy season, some place face floods. So, the department is building dams to solve those problems to the most possible degree, according to the sources of IWUMD. IWUMD built 11 dams in fiscal year 2018-2019 for agricultural development, availability of irrigation water, flood prevention and water supply in summer.—Han Min (Translated by TMT)

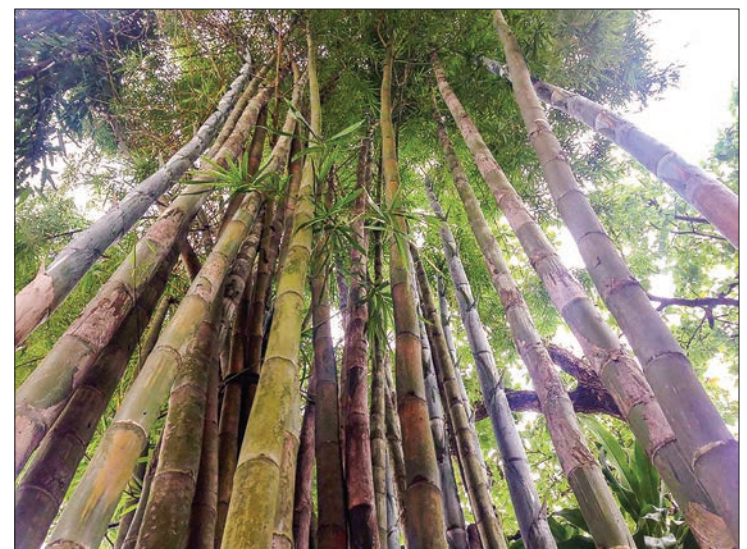
Sagaing Region considers bamboo plantation requests from local businesses

FORTY-two entrepreneurs have petitioned to use 2,400 acres of forest area in Sagaing Region to cultivate bamboo for raw materials for private industries, said U Thein Sein, head of the regional forestry department.

Authorities approve of bamboo plantations in forests that are damaged or have low number of trees in order to generate additional income for the nation,

make the environment greener, and moderate watersheds.

Similar petitions include one for 1,000 acres in Kanni Township by 20 farmers, one for 700 acres in Kawlin Township by 14 farmers, and one for 600 acres by 6 farmers, and two for 50 acres by a farmer each in Indaw Township.—Win Oo (Zayar Taing) ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Authorities approve of bamboo plantations in forests that are damaged or have low number of trees. PHOTO: NYI ZAW MOE

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Myanma Timber Enterprise to cut annual logging quota by half

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He also urged collaborating with relevant organizations to perform the proper medical examinations, treatment and research for elephant conservation.

Next, timber production officials from the various states and regions presented their reports for the periods 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, while the Director-General of the Forest

Department provided a technical perspective on the annual logging limitation and high-value timber plantations.

Later in the afternoon, the Union Minister visited the Yangon Gems and Jewellery Sales Center in Hlinethaya Industrial Zone 2 where he observed the production and sale of raw and finished jade products, market penetration and employment creation. — MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Union Minister U Ohn Win addresses the coordination meeting of the Myanma Timber Enterprise in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Educative talks held for protection of children and women



Educative talks on protection of children and women being convened yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye said yesterday that the relevant ministries, INGOs and social organizations are working together for law enforcement to protect children and women from various forms of mental and physical abuses.

The Union Minister attended an educative campaign of the Orphans Reduction and Protection Association (Nay Pyi Taw) held at Thukha Soe Hotel in Pyinmana.

At the event, he said that his ministry was implementing the Early Childhood Care and Development Law that was enacted in February 2016, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to help the children for their survival, development, protection and their participation in the communities.

Dr Win Myat Aye said, "These tasks were performed with the collaboration of relevant

ministries, NGOs, social communities, international organization, parents, family members and public."

The Department of Social Welfare has set the minimum norms for protection of children at the philanthropic centres, while the department is conducting the courses for early childhood care and development programmes.

He assured that children would only be granted for citizenship in accordance with the existing law, although they can be registered for birth.

Myanmar has signed in the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in 2014.

Daw Kyi Kyi Nyunt, Chairwoman of the Orphans Reduction and Protection Association (Nay Pyi Taw), held talks on consequences and unwanted pregnancy, Police Officer Daw Thu Zaw Lwin of Child Protection Unit

about child rape and trafficking in persons, Secretary of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area's Women's Affairs Federation Daw Nway Moe Aye about prevention of women and girls from various forms of abuse and Deputy Director Daw Hlaing Moe Myat of Department of Social Welfare about actions against possible abuses.

The event was also attended by the Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, the directors general, women affairs committees, representatives from relevant organizations, parents and students.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye also visited Oo Yin Child Development Philanthropic Centre in Thekyun village of Uttarathiri Township, and discussed minimum norms for child care and protection and the child rights. He also gave school books, nutritious snacks and toys to the children. — MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Rakhine Chief Minister opens upgraded high school

RAKINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu attended inauguration ceremony of upgraded No. 4 Basic Education High School of Taungup Township on 3 August afternoon.

At the school meeting hall, the Chief Minister made a remark on the ceremony, saying the importance of educated people for the development of the country, while the Rakhine State Government is upgrading school buildings and appointing the required teachers.

He also urged for cooperation of teachers, school children and parents for increasing a pass rate of the State.

Then, the State's Social Affairs Minister and the Ed-

ucation Officer presented undertakings for better exam results, following a member of school committee said an appreciation for upgrading the school.

The school was first established on 2 June 1981 as a primary school, and it was gradually developed into the middle school on 9 October 2013 and the preliminary high school. It was upgraded to the high school on 23 May 2019.

The Chief Minister also presented K3.6 million cash fund for construction a creek bridge in Taungup Township to the ward administrator.— Tin Maung Lwin, Tin Tun (IPRD) ■ (Translated by Aung Khin)



Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu delivers the speech at the inauguration ceremony of upgraded No. 4 Basic Education High School in Taungup Township on 3 August. **PHOTO: KAN TUN**

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Rosewood Yangon, formerly New Law Courts, gets Blue Plaque

THE Rosewood Yangon Hotel in Kyauktada Township, formerly the New Law Courts, became the 31st site to receive a Blue Plaque from the Yangon Heritage Trust on 4 August, as a mark of the structure's deep historic and cultural significance and enduring legacy.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Yangon City Development Committee Deputy Mayor U Soe Lwin, Dr Thant Myint U, the founder and chairman of the YHT, and officials concerned were present at the event.

"The city's landmark heritage buildings are marked with blue plaques which serve as historical markers. Those heritages will pass on to future generations. Yangon Region is aimed to be shaped as a livable economic capital through sustainable development and heritage conservation," said the Yangon Region Chief Minister.

It was built between 1927 and 1931 as the New Law Courts, replacing the older District Courts and Public Offices constructed in 1868. The Burmese Socialist Programme Party used the building as its headquarters from 1965 until 1988. The building was once



The Rosewood Yangon Hotel in Kyauktada Township gets a Blue Plaque on 4 August.
PHOTO: ZAR NI MAUNG

again used as a Yangon Region office complex, including the Yangon Region Court and public offices.

In 2012, tenders were invited from private developers. In 2014, Prime Residence and the Yangon Region government signed the lease agreement, and the building has since been renovated to become the Rosewood Yangon hotel.

The Yangon Heritage Trust's Founder and Chairman, Dr. Thant Myint U, said: "The YHT has asked that the entire area around Strand Road and Lower Pansodan be redeveloped in a way that will protect

our unparalleled heritage. That is good for local residents, it creates jobs. I really hope the completion of this impressive project will lead quickly towards the implementation of the plans YHT has been working on now for years."

"We are deeply honored to receive the 31st Blue Plaque from the Yangon Heritage Trust in recognition of our efforts to preserve the heritage, the former New Law Courts. We thank the master craftsmen, artisans, and designers who worked tirelessly to strike a delicate balance between conservation and modernization. We hope our

community agrees that the hotel not only pays a respectful tribute to Yangon's rich cultural legacy, but also creates an exciting new landmark for this unique and vibrant city. The hotel's soft opening has been done. The European Restaurants and café have been opened. The Grand Bloom is also available for rent. The grand opening is in October," said Mr. Ed Brea, the managing director of Rosewood Yangon. The new hotel is a restored heritage building, featuring 205 guestrooms and suites. The renovation work cost about US\$100 million.—Myint Maung ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Strong winds topple trees in Myeik, house destroyed

Firemen clear the tree trunks and branches after the strong wind in Myeik Township yesterday. **PHOTO: KHINE HTOO (MYEIK IPRD)**

A twenty-feet tall tree fell on a house in Myeik, Taninthayi Region, after strong winds toppled it over yesterday morning. The fifty-year old tree destroyed the house of U Myat Myo Win but there were no casualties.

Similarly, a fifteen-feet tall plumeria tree was knocked over by harsh winds on Yone Taung Road in the marketplace and an eighteen-feet tall man-

go tree by the Myeik-Kywe Gu road fell down as well. No casualties were reported in both incidents.

After a public report, the Township Fire Department Head, U Soe Kyaw Thu, led debris clearance together with police and administrative bodies from the incidents.

The family of the demolished house were provided

with 15 rescue items, K100,000 for house construction and K14,700 as rice ration by the Natural Disaster Management Department, and with 11 construction items, a set of sanitary products and feminine products each, and two rolls of tarpaulin from the Myanmar Red Cross Society. — Khine Htoo (Myeik IPRD) ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Speeding truck slams into tree in Minhla Township; two killed

A Hijet truck crashed into a tree between the 103/5 and 103/6 mile posts near Thittu-aing village in Minhla Township, Thayawady District, Bago Region, leaving two people dead and six seriously injured. The fatal accident occurred when the truck, reportedly driven by Zaw Lwin, en route from Yangon to Pyay, lost control and it crashed into a tree. Two people, identified as Maung Han Zin Htet (13) and Daw Thaung Kyi (60), were killed on the spot. Six people were rushed to the hospital with serious injuries.

The Minhla police have filed a case of reckless driving against Zaw Lwin under Sections 337, 338, and 304 (A) of the Penal code.—Pauksa ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Border trade accounts for 30.4 per cent of total rice export in current fiscal year

MYANMAR'S rice export through border trade channel showed a drastic plunge in current fiscal year; according to the figures released by the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Myanmar primarily exports rice to China through the border gates. However, trade in agricultural products was halted on account of China clamping down on illegal trade in border gates.

At present, the rice export to China went through government-to-government (G2G) agreement pact and barter system in exchange of Chinese goods. Earlier, border trade was relatively high compared to sea trade in rice export. Nevertheless, border trade accounts for only 30.4 per cent of the total rice export this FY, while maritime trade constitutes 69.59 per cent.

Between 1 October, 2018 and 19 July, 2019, rice export through border gates earned an

estimated \$173 million, whereas the sea trade saw an income of \$400 million, the data of the Commerce Ministry showed.

The volume of rice and broken rice export as of 19 July was estimated at 1.89 million metric tons, earning over US\$573.28 million., according to an announcement of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

China, which accounts for 32.89 per cent of total rice export, is the main buyer of Myanmar's rice, followed by the Philippines and Cameroon in the second and third places respectively. Additionally, Côte d'Ivoire is ranked at the fourth place while Madagascar is the fifth largest buyer of Myanmar rice. European Union countries accounts for over 20 per cent of export, while 26 per cent of Myanmar's rice export goes to African countries. Myanmar's broken rice are mostly exported



Workers loading rice sacks onto the truck in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

to Belgium, followed by Indonesia, China, the Netherlands and the UK. It is placed on 34 foreign

markets. Myanmar shipped 3.6 million tons of rice to foreign countries in the 2017-2018 Fis-

cal Year, which is the all-time highest record of rice export.—GNLM ■ (Translated by EMM)

Sesame exports exceed 90,000 tons in current fiscal year

MYANMAR exported 90,000 tons of various sesame seeds worth US\$147 million between 1 October, 2018 and 12 July, 2019, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar shipped the sesame seeds to markets in the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, and Poland among the EU countries. The EU markets prefer organically farmed sesame seeds from Myanmar, said an official from the Trade Promotion Department.

Japan prefers Myanmar's black sesame seeds, cultivated under good agricultural practices (GAP), and purchases them after a quality assessment. Black sesame seeds from Myanmar are also exported to South Korea and Japan. Meanwhile, China purchases various coloured sesame seeds from the country.

A growth in the sesame seed acreage combined with GAP has helped increase exports. Farm-

ers who used GAP in farming have reaped benefits, said exporters.

Sesame crops are cultivated throughout the year in the country. Magway Region, which is gaining a reputation as the oil pot of Myanmar, is the main producer of sesame seeds, and it was also the first region to adopt the GAP system for sesame farming.

The area under sesame cultivation is also growing in Mandalay and Sagaing regions. Of the edible oil crops grown in Myanmar, the acreage under sesame is the highest, accounting for 51.3 per cent of the overall oil crop plantation. The volume of sesame exports was registered at over 96,000 tons, worth \$130 million, in the 2015-2016 fiscal year; 100,000 tons, worth \$145 million, in the 2016-2017 FY; and, 120,000 tons, worth \$147 million, in the 2017-2018 FY.—GNLM ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Sesame plantations seen in Kyaukse Township. PHOTO: THET MAUNG

Demand for Myanmar cashew nuts stable this year

MYANMAR cashew nuts are being increasingly demanded by foreign markets, according to traders. Earlier, the market was unstable, but this year, there has been a steady demand for cashew nuts. However, the lack of advanced packaging methods is weakening productivity and leading to lower export volumes.

More than 700 tons of cashew nuts are being shipped to foreign trade partners every month. The prices are ranging between K15,000 and K27,000 per viss (1.6 kg), depending on quality.

The exports of cashew nuts bring in around US\$14 million annually. Myanmar is exporting the nuts to Viet Nam, China, Singapore, Thailand, South Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the African countries, Japan, and India.

In Myanmar, cashews are grown in the Yangon, Bago, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi regions, and in Mon, Kayin, and Rakhine states. Of the 200,000 acres of farmland available for cashew cultivation across the country, around 150,000 acres is fertile.

Myanmar exported about

2,300 tonnes of cashew nuts in the 2011-2012 FY, more than 3,400 tonnes in the 2012-2013 FY, 3,900 tonnes in the 2013-2014 FY, 2,400 tonnes in the 2015-2016 FY, and 1,700 tonnes in the 2016-2017 FY. Cashew nuts enjoy a strong demand in the United States, the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, Germany, Australia, Canada, Japan, and Thailand. India, Viet Nam, Brazil, Benin, Guinea-Bissau, and Cambodia are the world's largest producers of cashew nuts.—Htet Myat ■ (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Sesame farmers hit hard by drought

Drought is posing difficulties for sesame farmers in Pho Kywal Village, Mahlaing Township, Meiktila District, Mandalay Region.

U Min Aung, a sesame farmer from Pho Kyawl village, said: "As there is lack of rain, it is unlikely that farmers will be able to grow anything. The next crop is ground nut. It needs rain. If the drought persists, we won't be able to pay back subsidies. If corn cannot be grown, it will be difficult to feed cows and goats."

"There are difficulties in agribusiness. Our rain crop is sesame. Let alone ending crop, it is highly unlikely we will get

our seeds back. If the authority does something about it, we might be okay. We would like some assistance," said U Aung Zan from Pho Kyawl.

"Because of the drought, there is no way we can earn an income. We will have to take a loan. To return the loans, our youths have to go abroad to work. The government provides K100,000 in loan for an acre. We can't be sure whether we can pay back, but the loan helps a little. We just don't know how to carry on with this drought," said U Aung Zan.

"We don't know about the places where there are dams, but since we don't have any of

them, we are facing trouble. If we can dig wells in every field and get enough water, we can extend our business. If we can realize it, there will surely be development in agribusiness," said U Maung Kyi.

In Mahlaing Township, it has rained only once or twice so far, and some places haven't seen rain yet. It has been reported that there has been a good yield of sesame in Htan Ta Pin, Lal Gyi, and Kuu Gyi Villages, which have received sufficient rainfall. Pho Kywal Village is facing difficulties due to the drought.—Maung Thei-IPRD ■

(Translated by Alphonsus)

Thanantana Dhamma Palaka (Hindu) Association holds 25th Waso robe offering ceremony

THANANTANA Dhamma Palaka (Hindu) Association held 25th Waso Robe Offering Ceremony at the State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) yesterday.

It was attended by Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Ambassador of India Mr Shri Saurabh Kumar, Director-General of the Religious Affairs Department U Myit Oo and officials, Chairman of the All-Interfaith Unity Group U Thaung Htaik and members, Chairman of the Young Men's Buddhist Association U Sein Than and members, U Nanda, Chairman of All Myanmar Hindu Central Council, and members, U Maung Maung,

Chairman of the Thanantana Dhamma Palaka Association, and members, and people from Hindu community.

The congregation led by the Union minister first received the Five Precepts from the Yezagyo Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Nanindhasara.

Afterwards, Hindu women recited the Mingala Suta, and Shri Rajesh Kumar (a) U Kyaw Kyaw of the Thanantana Dhamma Palaka Association supplicated the association's activities in the areas religion, social and culture.

Afterwards, on behalf of the association, the chairman and deputy chairman presented a certificate of honour to Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko for being conferred an honorary



Indian Ambassador Mr Shri Saurabh Kumar offers Waso robes to the members of the Sangha at State Pariyatti Sasana University (Yangon) yesterday. **PHOTO:MNA**

doctorate title by the Chulalongkorn University of Thailand.

At the ceremony, the Indian

ambassador and officials offered Waso robes to the Members of the Sangha. The ceremony end-

ed with a "soon" (meal) to the Members of the Sangha.—MNA
■ (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)



Union Minister U Thein Swe presents the national level skills certificate to a trainee at Ka Naung Hall in Mandalay yesterday. **PHOTO:MNA**

NSSA certificate awarding ceremony held in Mandalay

Certificate awarding ceremony of National Skill Standards Authority (NSSA) was held at Ka Naung Hall in Mandalay yesterday morning.

At the event, Union Minister of Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Shwe said that NSSA is now evaluating level 1 and 2 of 4 levels and are planning to evaluate levels 3 and 4. NSSA is working towards producing competent workers, which are the basic need in developing in a country, with combined effort of Public, Private Partnership. They are also drawing up policies to develop vocational training on

technology and evaluating skills.

NSSA has achieved ISO 9001:2015 certificate for quality insurance. With the help of ILO they are working towards ASEAN Mutual Recognition of Skill. They are preparing for Industrial 4.0 in international market. As skill need to develop with ever changing technology, collaboration form all field is needed.

Then, level 1 and 2 skilled workers who passed at Mandalay and upper Myanmar exam centres from October 2008 to February were given certificates. Some 373 male workers and 31 female workers received certificates.

Four examiners and one exam centre were also given NSSA certificates. NSSA has given level 1 and two certificates to 9,034 male workers and 3,487 female workers.

Present at the event were Mandalay Regional Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, U Myo Thit, officials of Assessment and certification committee, representatives from exam centers and private training centers, employees and employer organizations, GIZ, Swiss Contact and partners and awardees.—MNA
■ (Translated by Alphonsus)

University rectors share academic experiences

THE Rectors' Committee of the National Education Policy Commission organized an event yesterday morning to share experiences of its members.

Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi attended the occasion taken place at Mandalay University Convocation Hall, and made a key note speech.

"Social harmony and mutual trust are important for diverse community in 21st century. Development of artificial intelligence technology and the consequences of weather deterioration are demanding life-long learning for quality education and capacity," he said.

The Trends Shaping Education 2019 report of The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has concluded

that Asian region or neighbouring countries of Myanmar are developing to become global economic powers, he said

The Union Minister also remarked a quality education system is required to encounter the emerging challenges such as globalization, democracy, security, increase in aging population and the trends of 21st century.

Pyithu Hluttaw Education Promotion Committee Chairman Dr Tin Aung and the Rectors' Committee Chairman Dr Zaw Wai Soe made opening remarks on the event.

Rector Dr Saw Pyone Naing from Sagaing Institute of Education discussed the topic titled 'Teaching for Tomorrow', Rector U Kyaw Swa Soe from University of Computer Studies (Mandalay)

about 'Effect of Digitalization on Higher Education', Professor Dr Maung Maung Naing from Yadanabon University about 'Internationalization for Higher Education', Rector Dr Kyi Soe from West Yangon Technological University about 'University link

for Industry Engagement', Rector Dr Sint Soe from Mandalay Technological University about 'Comprehensive University', Rector Dr Kyi Shwin from Yangon University of Foreign Language about 'Internal Quality Assurance', and Rector Dr Zaw Wai

Soe from Yangon University of Medicine (1) about 'Research Capacity Building in Universities'. The participants then discussed the topics in sub-groups, and exchanged the results, followed by adopting future plans.—MNA
■ (Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi delivers speech at the experience sharing event of the Rector's Committee of the National Education Policy Commission in Mandalay yesterday. **PHOTO:MNA**

Pets in America now get human treatment

WASHINGTON (United States)— Eleven-year-old Bess waits patiently to be immersed in water just a little cooler than her body temperature.

Her hydrotherapy session will last only 17 minutes but it does wonders for this arthritis sufferer. Bess is a cat.

To ease her joint pain, the Maine Coon, a touch overweight at 21 pounds (10 kilograms), is taken every week to the Friendship Hospital for Animals, a veterinary clinic on a pleasant Washington street.

Beyond traditional veterinary treatment, the clinic offers forms of care once reserved for humans, such as acupuncture and therapeutic ultrasound.

Pets are now increasingly seen as genuine family members, said Christine Klippen, one of the 63 veterinarians who are available at the clinic every day of the year.

And this is particularly true for millennials, she said, who see themselves as moms and dads to their “fur babies.” Given the higher incomes in the US capital, they often seek out the best pet care available.

In the United States, 84.9 million households, or 68 per cent, have a pet, according to Steve King, head of the American Pet Products Association.

“Millennials are the largest pet-owning demographic among



Pets in America now get human treatment. PHOTO: AFP

all generations,” he said, and have surpassed the postwar Baby Boom generation.

Last year, consumer spending on pets hit a record \$72.6 billion and the APPA expects this will rise to \$75.4 billion in 2019.

Health care spending is the fastest-rising category as pet owners learn about available treatments.

“There’s less pushback than there was,” said Brant Hassell, a veterinarian practicing at the District Veterinary Hospital.

“These dogs are a lot of people’s first children,” he said.

“If I say, ‘Oh, my goodness. This dog has a loose tooth,’ they’re just like, ‘my baby!’”

Back at Friendship Hospital, Bess the cat walks on an underwater treadmill, the water up to her whiskers, the pace slow and regular as a metronome.

But to keep up, Bella, a “sen-

ior” dog, needed a little extra motivation in the form of peanut butter.

“We are more selective with food when they’re overweight,” said Janay Austin-Carlson, a rehabilitation practitioner.

Walking in water creates greater resistance to movement, making exercise more effective.

“One minute in here is much harder than one minute outside,” she said.

Given Washington’s often oppressive summertime heat, where temperatures can easily hit 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 degrees Celsius) and humidity rises to 70 per cent, the animals can also exercise in relative comfort.

“We can play with the speed, the water level,” said Austin-Carlson. “All those things create different dynamics.”— AFP ■

UK’s Johnson offers new health funds to meet Brexit promise

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Prime Minister Boris Johnson promised new funds for Britain’s state-run national health service (NHS) on Sunday, seeking to fulfil one of the promises of his 2016 Brexit campaign.

Johnson pledged an extra £1.8 billion (2.0 billion euros, \$2.2 billion) to immediately help frontline services, in a move that further fuelled speculation he is preparing for a snap election.

During the referendum on Britain’s European Union membership, Johnson’s “Vote Leave” campaign promised to divert £350 million a week sent to Brussels to the NHS after Brexit.

But the claim was misleading — Britain’s gross contribution to the EU budget is £350 million but it gets a £85 million a week rebate.

In an article in the Sunday Times, Johnson paid tribute to NHS staff but noted “the pressures, the delays, the cancellations and the obvious need to get more funding to the front line”.

“Which is why I am so determined to deliver now on the promises of that 2016 referendum campaign: not just to honour the will of the people, but to increase the cash available for this amazing national institution,” he wrote.

However, the main opposi-

tion Labour party questioned whether the money would ever be delivered and said that even if it was, it would not make up for a decade of spending cuts.

The Nuffield Trust health think tank said the NHS has a £6 billion maintenance backlog and the new funds were only a “fraction” of what was needed to fulfil Johnson’s pledge to modernise 20 hospitals.

Critics also argue that spending plans will never be fulfilled if there is a “no deal” Brexit.

Johnson has vowed to take Britain out of the European Union on 31 October, after his predecessor Theresa May was forced to twice delay Brexit amid wrangling over the exit terms.

Parliament has rejected the divorce deal May struck with the EU but many MPs say they will stop Johnson’s threat to leave without a deal, fearing the economic disruption.

EU leaders meanwhile say they will not renegotiate May’s deal, creating an impasse that many at Westminster believe can only end in a snap election.

Johnson has fuelled this speculation by touring Britain and making a series of domestic policy pledges in his first days in Downing Street. The NHS pledge follows a promise on police funding. — AFP ■

City draw first blood against Liverpool with Community Shield win

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Manchester City drew fired the first shot in their battle for supremacy with rivals Liverpool on Sunday as they snatched the Community Shield with a 5-4 penalty shoot-out win after a 1-1 draw at Wembley.

Raheem Sterling gave City a first half lead before Joel Matip grabbed a late equaliser for Liverpool in the annual curtain-raiser to the English top-flight season.

In the shoot-out, City keeper Claudio Bravo saved from Georginio Wijnaldum, with Gabriel Jesus driving in the winning kick after successful efforts from Ilkay Gundogan, Bernardo Silva, Phil Foden and Aleksandr Zinchenko.

The jubilant celebrations from City’s players and fans showed inflicting an early psychological blow on Liverpool was a moment to savour, regardless



Manchester City players celebrate during the presentation of the trophy after winning the English FA Community Shield football match between Manchester City and Liverpool at Wembley Stadium in north London on 4 August 2019. PHOTO: AFP

of the supposed warm-up status of the glamour friendly.

With City installed as favourites to win the title for a third

successive season and Liverpool expected to present the strongest challenge to Pep Guardiola’s side, their meeting on the eve of

the season was a window into what to expect this term.

After pipping Liverpool to last season’s Premier League

title with 98 points to their rivals’ 97, City went on to complete an unprecedented domestic treble by adding the FA Cup to the League Cup they won earlier in the campaign.

But Jurgen Klopp’s men didn’t dwell on that painful near-miss as they won the Champions League just weeks later.

On the evidence of this hard-fought contest, which featured both flashes of quality and signs of rustiness, there will little to separate the two teams as they go head-to-head for the major prizes once again over the next 10 months.

Retaining the Community Shield trophy they won 12 months ago would improve City’s belief that they can repeat last season’s remarkable silverware haul, but Liverpool could take encouragement as well after they finished strongly enough to have won.— AFP ■

Crush illegal trade for nation's economic growth

IT IS common knowledge that illegal trade is detrimental to the State as it poses a threat to the national economy. Moreover, illegal trade channels tax revenues away from State coffers, apart from giving rise to corruption, especially among the authorities and State service personnel. Corruption within government bodies and administrative organs can poison every sector — from the rule of law and judiciary to public security and economy.

A market flooded with illegal goods creates a difficult environment for the sustainability of domestic small and medium enterprises, while hampering the nation's industrial development. The worst is that corruption and an unfavourable economic environment scare away foreign direct investment.

In many cases, the involvement of transnational organized crime has been seen in the border trade between the country and its neighbors. Transnational organized crimes include illicit

drug trafficking, gunrunning, sex trafficking, poaching and illegal wildlife and parts trade, trafficking of hazardous agents, and smuggling of precious stones, metals, and other natural resources. One of the illegal trades that is hitting the nation hard is timber smuggling and the illegal export of logs. According to some news sources, Myanmar lost 19 per cent of its forests worth millions of US dollars to illegal logging and trade. During the ten-year period between 2005 and 2014, Myanmar officially exported only 20 per cent of its jade, while the rest, or 80

per cent, reached international markets through illegal routes.

Illegal trade brings substandard goods, fake or unregistered medicines, and unsafe foodstuff into the country through various means and routes. Additionally, the illegal entry of food into the domestic market is a curse for local SMEs and farmers.

Unfortunately, 97 per cent of the contraband goods come from the east, as many illegal traders have connections in Chiwna and Thailand. Failure to curb illegal trade will widen the country's trade deficit and worsen financial woes.

Well aware of the adverse effects of such illicit business, the Office of the President of Myanmar established the 40-member Steering Committee to Crack Down on Illegal Trade on 25 June, 2019, and set 13 tasks for it. Special task forces of nine regions and states that share a common border with neighbouring countries have seized contrabands, with a street value of K11.828 billion, till June this year.

The robust growth of the national economy calls for a healthy legal trade and the elimination of illegal trade in its entirety. So, we hope that every person concerned remains free from corruption in the fight against illegal trade, till it is eradicated.

■ ■ ■

The Arctic is burning: how will it affect us?

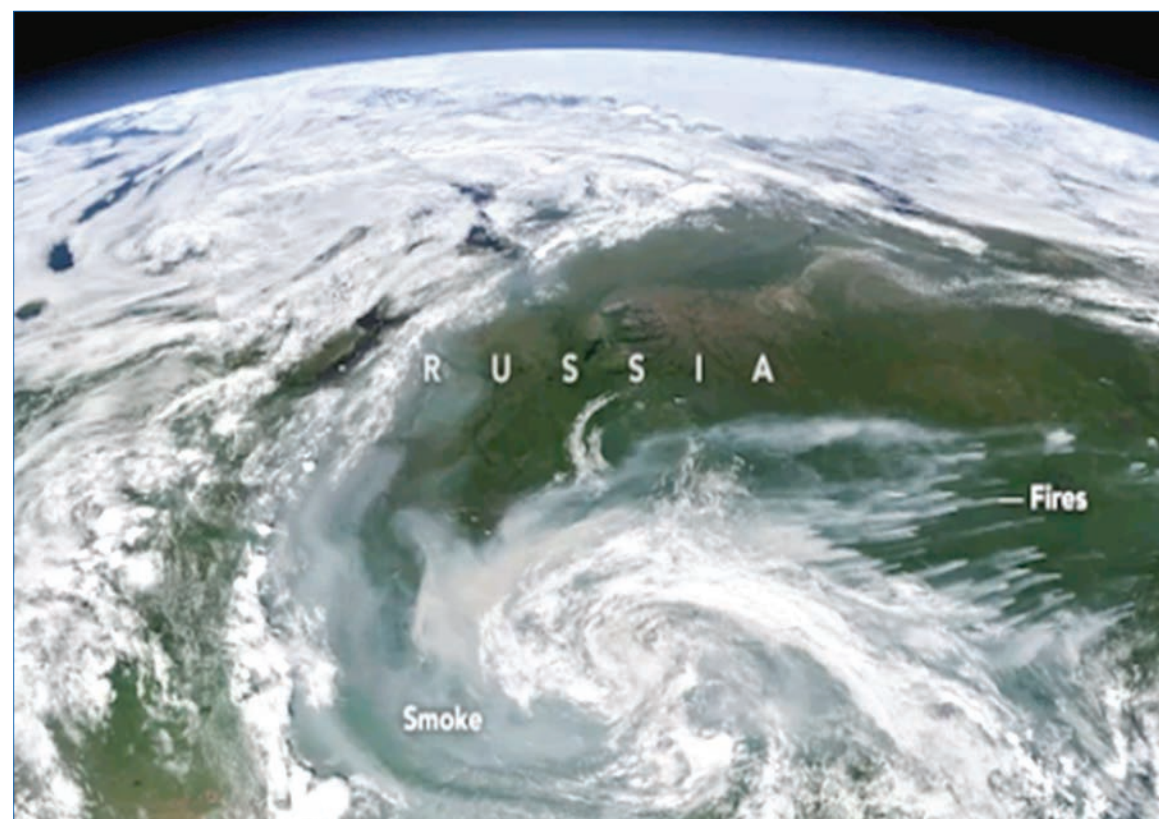
By Khin Maung Myint

I HAVEN'T written about the climate change for quite sometime now. The reason is: there are conflicting ideas emerging from those who believe the climate change is really taking place and from those who are denying it. Those conflicting ideas made the situations very confusing. As the so-called experts or scientists from both camps are adamant that their opinions are right, I don't want to get caught in between the two schools of thoughts. Although I haven't written anything relating to the climate change lately, I have never lost track of the latest developments concerning that subject. From what I had learned and noticed, I believe that the climate change is really taking place.

The world is reeling under the extreme weather conditions, desertification, draughts, flooding and the shrinking of the land masses and some ocean islands disappearing due to ocean levels rising. These are real and undeniable facts that our planet Earth is facing today. If these adverse consequences are not due to the climate change, then what could be the real cause behind them? I don't think the climate change deniers have any plausible explanations, but blindly denying vehemently.

In the past I had written extensively about how the over-loggings, encroachments of the forest areas for agricultural and industrial developments and wildfires had led to the deforestations, and the extensive use of fossil fuels gave way to the productions of the greenhouse gases. In those articles I had tried to explain how these in turn trigger the global warming that causes the temperature rises and lead to the climate change. Thus in this article I will not be going into detail about them as I believe that more and more people are coming to realize and recognize those facts as the root causes of the climate change. However, I may be repeating what adverse consequences we could face in the future if the temperature rises cannot be reined in as required by the agreements reached at the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (UNFCCC) held in Paris in 2015, known as COP21.

Recently there were reports of numerous wildfires raging on in the Arctic region. That is a cause for concern for everyone all over



the globe. Since the month of June this year, which was the hottest June ever recorded, more than 100 wildfires are raging on inside the Arctic circle in Russia, Greenland and Alaska. The cause of the fires are thought to be mostly caused by lightening strikes. Wildfires are quite common in the summer times in the Arctic, but this year's wildfires are burning farther north than in the past.

Russia is the worst hit, where wildfires are burning in 11 of the country's 49 regions, affecting even in fire-free areas, where people are choking on smoke that is blowing across the country. The largest fires are located in the regions of Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk and Buryatia, according to the Earth Observatory. These conflagrations have burned 320 square miles (829 square kilometers), 150 square miles (388 square km) and 41 square miles (106 square km) in these regions, respectively, as of July 22.

According to the same source, the Russian city of Krasnoyarsk is under a layer of haze. While Novosibirsk, Siberia's largest city, doesn't have any fires as of now, smoke carried there by the winds caused the city's air quality to drop significantly. Wildfires are also burning in Greenland and parts of Alaska since June. It's common for fires to burn during the Arctic's summer months, but the number and extent this year are "unusual and unprecedented".

According to the CNN reports, these fires are taking toll on the atmosphere; they've re-



The Arctic ice breakup.

leased about 100 megatons of carbon dioxide from June 1 to July 21, which is roughly equivalent to the amount of carbon dioxide Belgium released in 2017. The Arctic is heating up faster than other parts of the world, making it easier for fires to thrive there. In Siberia, for example, the average June temperature this year is nearly 10 degrees Fahrenheit (5.5 degrees Celsius) hotter than the long-term average between 1981 and 2010. Russia on Monday, 29 July, declared a state of emergency in two regions of Siberia as wildfires rage across 12,000 square miles of countryside. Terrified residents in the Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk regions called on the state to act as flames engulfed an area the size of Belgium.

Many of this summer's fires appear to be burning in peat soils, rather than in the forests. This is a dangerous situation, because whereas forests might typically burn for a few hours, peat soils can blaze for days or even months.

Moreover, peat soils are known as carbon reservoirs. As they burn, they release carbon, which will further exacerbate greenhouse warming, leading to more fires. It is a universally accepted fact that the greenhouse gases are the main driving forces behind the global warming that cause temperature rises, which fuel the climate changes.

Having stated the latest situations of the wildfires raging on in more than 100 places in the Arctic, let us observe how seriously damaging those developments can cause to us humans, the animals and our planet itself. One thing that is undeniable is the climate change will significantly worsen. When that happens, all the adverse consequences of the climate change will take place: draughts, desertification, depletion of grazing grounds for animals, flooding, melting of ice, ocean level rises, which will result in some ocean islands disappearing and low coastal areas to recede farther inland and thus depriving inhabitable and agricultural spaces. The worst case scenario would be wide spread conflicts between the people who are desperate to get arable spaces for their survival.



A polar bear stranded on a small iceberg during the breakup.

Even now, the climate change is "absolutely" already causing deaths, according to a new report on the health impacts of the climate crisis, which also predicts climate-related stunting, malnutrition and lower IQ in children within the coming decades. The immediate effects are the health hazards caused by the smokes from the wildfires. They can be very fatal, especially to the infants and elderly persons. Causes of deaths due to respiratory problems will rise almost out of control in the neighbourhood of the wildfires and could reach epidemic proportions if the present situations in the Arctic persist.

Some 200 reindeer have been found dead in the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard in the Arctic, according to the Norwegian Polar Institute. This unusually high number of deaths resulted from climate change in the region, the Institute explained. Three researchers found the corpses of the animals, who died of hunger dur-

ing the past winter, while conducting the Institute's annual mapping of wild reindeer populations in the island group, located some 1,200 km from the North Pole. An expert attributed this "very high mortality rate" to the consequences of global warming, which, in the Arctic, is occurring twice as fast as in the rest of the world.

I can go on writing the adverse consequences of the climate change, but I hope I had said enough to convince some people, especially the climate change deniers that the climate change is real and here to stay. The only hope for the Earth and all living things — humans, animals, trees and plants alike, is for a miracle to happen. Some scientists are predicting a solar minimum to take place soon. If that should happen the planet would cool down, but

from past experience such a solar minimum could cause a Mini Ice Age. The last time a prolonged solar minimum was the Maunder minimum, which saw seven decades of freezing weather, which began in 1645 and lasted through to 1715. That would be another long story, which I may write about sometimes in the future.

However, such a situation too is undesirable, which would be like, how should I put it, because the most common phrase to describe such a situation as "out of the frying pan into the fire" would be irrelevant here. Thus the best solution would be for all nations to abide by the Paris Agreement or the COP21, which set parameters to fight the climate change. The most important amongst those parameters is to control the temperature rise at 1.5° Celsius or less above the average temperature level of the pre-industrialization periods, by controlling the carbon dioxide emissions.

■ ■ ■



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 4th August, 2019)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is strong to vigorous over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 05th August, 2019: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, fairly widespread in Northern Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavyfalls in Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States and isolated heavyfalls in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Kayah States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) m.p.h. Wave height will be about (10– 13) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of rain in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 05th August, 2019: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 05th August, 2019: Some rain or thundershowers which may be heavy at times. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 05th August, 2019: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

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

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French 'Flyboard' inventor poised for 2nd Channel crossing bid

PARIS (France)—A Frenchman who has spent years developing a jet-powered hoverboard will again try to zoom across the English Channel on Sunday, after a first attempt last month was cut short when a botched refuelling attempt sent him into the water.

Franky Zapata plans to make an early launch on his "Flyboard" from Sangatte on the northern coast of France for the 20-minute trip to St. Margaret's Bay in Dover, on England's south coast.

"We've seen things, we've learned things, and the winds haven't changed so I think it will happen," Zapata said at a press conference Saturday in Sangatte, affirming that he had "a much better chance" this time around.

The five turbines on Zapata's craft propel him at speeds of up to 190 kilometres (118 miles) an hour, powered by a backpack full of kerosene that can keep him airborne for around 10 minutes.

He hopes to make the 35-kilometre (22-mile) crossing in 20 minutes, keeping an average

speed of 140 kilometres an hour (87 mph) at a height of 15-20 metres (50-65 feet) above the water.

But Zapata, a former jet-ski champion, tumbled into the middle of the busy shipping lane on 25 July after failing to land on a boat waiting in English waters to give him a fresh pack of kerosene.

"The trickiest part is really the refuelling," the 40-year-old Zapata said last Thursday. "I didn't let up on the gas at the right moment."

"Aviation is the result of people who have had failures, and it's by getting back up that we move forward," he said.

This time the refuelling boat will be bigger and have a larger landing area, and French navy vessels in the area will again be keeping an eye out in case of trouble. French maritime authorities have given Zapata's team permission to keep the refuelling boat in French waters, something they had refused the first time around citing safety concerns.

Zapata's team has been rac-



Franky Zapata had to be pulled from the water after a botched refuelling attempt when he first tried to fly across the English Channel on 25 July. **PHOTO: AFP**

ing to repair the hoverboard after it was damaged from falling in the Channel waters 10 days ago.

The main uncertainty this time around, Zapata said Saturday, is that his hoverboard might end up having "a little problem."

"Normally we test the machines for several weeks before big events. Here, it's a little bit worrying to be using a machine that has just been rebuilt," he said.

'My life's work'

Zapata has been developing his hoverboard for the past three years, despite losing two fingers during its maiden flight in his garage near Marseille, when they got sucked into the turbines.

He already holds the Guinness World Record for the farthest hoverboard flight, a 2.2-kilometre trip over the Mediterranean Sea in April 2016.

No Guinness adjudicator will

be on hand for the latest Channel attempt, though a spokeswoman said he could still be awarded a new record if the trip meets its guidelines.

Zapata burst into the spotlight at this year's 14 July Bastille Day military parade in Paris, where he and his craft soared noisily above a crowd of stunned onlookers that included French President Emmanuel Macron.

His device has also captured the attention of the French military, which in December gave Zapata's company, Z-AIR, a 1.3 million euro (\$1.4 million) development grant.

Defence Minister Florence Parly told France Inter radio that it might eventually serve a variety of purposes, "for example as a flying logistical platform or, indeed, as an assault platform."

"I can't help it, the first time I saw it fly I said, 'This is going to be my life's work'," Zapata told the French online media site Brut in a recent interview.

— AFP ■

Bolsonaro vows to fight 'illegal deforestation' in Brazil

BRASÍLIA (Brazil)—Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro vowed Saturday to combat "illegal deforestation," a day after the head of the agency that measures deforestation said he was being sacked after a row over the scale of the problem in the Amazon rainforest.

"We are going to act effectively in the fight against illegal deforestation," Bolsonaro wrote on his Facebook account, along with a video in which environment minister Ricardo Salles said the government would bring in new technology to measure deforestation with greater precision.

A day earlier, the head of Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (INPE), Ricardo Galvao, said he was being sacked after a row with Bolsonaro over deforestation.

Bolsonaro, a climate change skeptic, claimed the INPE figures "don't correspond to the truth" and were damaging to the institute and the country.

The president has previously floated the idea of opening up protected rainforest

areas to agriculture, a highly controversial move given the existing level of deforestation.

"We cannot accept sensationalism, or the disclosure of inaccurate numbers that cause great damage to Brazil's image," Bolsonaro said, reiterating comments from his row over the INPE figures.

The latest data released by INPE, an institution of international reputation, shows that deforestation has increased 40 per cent in the last two months

compared to the same period a year ago.

On Thursday, Bolsonaro, Salles and other ministers had refuted the INPE satellite data and said the methodologies for measuring deforestation would be changed.

The government admits deforestation has increased but insists it is not as great as indicated by the agency.

The sacking of Galvao fueled criticism from environmental groups.— AFP ■



President Jair Bolsonaro has previously floated the idea of opening up protected rainforest areas to agriculture. **PHOTO: AFP**

Pacific leaders want summit focus on climate, not China

WELLINGTON (New Zealand)—Pacific island leaders insist climate change, not China, will top the agenda when they meet in Tuvalu this month as western-aligned nations push to curb Beijing's growing influence in the region.

Once regarded as a sleepy backwater of the diplomatic world, the islands are now a hotbed of aid projects and charm offensives as anxiety over China's presence grows.

Australia has labelled its campaign the Pacific Step-Up, New Zealand has the Pacific Reset and Britain the Pacific Uplift, while the United States, Japan, and France have also intensified their efforts to court the region.

But local leaders attending the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in Tuvalu from August 13-16 are wary their concerns will be sidelined if they become pawns in a wider power struggle.

The 16-member forum mainly consists of small island nations, along with Papua New

Guinea, Australia, and New Zealand.

PIF secretary-general Dame Meg Taylor said the forum, whose members collectively refer to themselves as the Blue Pacific, was at a pivotal moment in its history.

"While we are the subject of the geopolitical manoeuvring and strategies of others, the Blue Pacific collective remains focused on charting our own destiny," she said.

The primary concern for island leaders -- many of whom live in low-lying nations threatened by rising seas -- is climate change.

In a pointed message to Australia's conservative government, Tuvalu Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga has warned Canberra's step-up strategy will fail unless it finally takes meaningful action to address the issue.

"They know very well that we will not be happy as a partner, to move forward, unless they are serious," he said.— AFP ■

29 killed in two US mass shootings within hours

EL PASO (United States) —Two mass shootings in the United States have left 29 people dead within 24 hours, the latest such attacks in a nation torn over how to tackle gun violence. A gunman armed with an assault rifle killed 20 people Saturday when he opened fire on shoppers at a packed Walmart store in El Paso, Texas. Less than 13 hours later, a lone shooter killed nine people in Dayton, Ohio early Sunday before being shot dead by responding police officers. The attacker opened fire around 1:00 am (0500 GMT) on a street in the popular bar and nightlife district called Oregon, leaving nine dead and 26 wounded. Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley said the shooter was wearing body armor and had high-capacity magazines and extra magazines. “In less than one minute Dayton first responders neutralized the shooter,” she said.

“I am amazed by the quick response of Dayton police that saved literally hundreds of lives,” Whaley said, adding that it was “the 250th mass shooting in America.” Actually, it was the 251st, according to the Gun Violence Archive, an NGO. It defines mass shooting as an incident in which at least four people are



Law enforcement agents respond to an active shooter situation at a Walmart near Cielo Vista Mall in El Paso, Texas on Saturday, 3 August 2019. PHOTO: AFP

wounded or killed in a shooting.

Dayton deputy police chief Lieutenant Colonel Matt Carper said police were working to identify the shooter and the FBI were on the scene. “Fortunately we had multiple officers in the immediate vicinity when this incident started so there was a very short timeline of violence, for that we’re very fortunate,” he said, praising the swift response by officers. “As bad as

this is, it could have been much, much worse.” Carper said the attack appeared to be the work of a lone shooter. The incident came just hours after the mass shooting at a Walmart store in Texas which has reignited debate about the US epidemic of gun violence.

President Donald Trump described the El Paso attack as “an act of cowardice” and police are treating it as a possible hate

crime.

One suspect was taken into custody while authorities were studying an extremist manifesto purportedly written by the gunman. Footage shot with cellphones appeared to show multiple bodies lying on the ground in the store’s parking lot while other footage showed terrified shoppers running out of the store as gunfire echoed. —AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

8 caught after Baghdad breakout from police: ministry

BAGHDAD (Iraq)—Eight out of 15 drug trafficking suspects have been recaptured after escaping custody in a Baghdad police station, Iraq’s interior ministry said, as the breakout prompted several dismissals.

“The search continues to find the others,” a police officer said, on condition of anonymity.

The 15 suspected members of a drug trafficking network escaped custody on Saturday, after having “insulted the police, then beaten them”, according to a security services official. —AFP ■

Airstrikes kill 2 IS militants in eastern Afghan province

JALALABAD (Afghanistan)—At least two militants affiliated with the Islamic State (IS) group have been confirmed dead after warplanes struck the outfit’s hideout in the eastern Nangarhar province, the provincial government said on Sunday.

The sorties, launched by unmanned planes, according to the statement, targeted a hideout of IS fighters in Wazir-o-Tangi area of Khogiani district on Saturday evening, killing two armed fighters on the spot.

A number of arms and ammunition of the militants were also destroyed in the raids, the government said in a statement. —Xinhua ■

US praises Australia’s ban on Chinese 5G tech

SYDNEY—US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Sunday praised Canberra’s decision to ban Chinese 5G technology in government-run wireless networks.

“Australia courageously and independently raised the alarm about the risk of China’s 5G ambitions before we caught on,” Pompeo said in Sydney. —Kyodo News ■

Iran seizes third foreign ship in less than month

TEHRAN (Iran)—Iran has seized a foreign tanker in the Gulf, state media said Sunday, in what would be the third such seizure in a month amid heightened tensions with its foe the United States.

The Islamic Revolutionary

Guard Corps “seized this ship around Farsi Island which was carrying around 700,000 litres of smuggled fuel”, said a Guards statement quoted by the official news agency IRNA.

Seven foreign crew were ar-

rested in the operation carried out on Wednesday night, said Fars news agency, which is considered close to the Guards.

Tensions between arch-enemies Iran and the US have soared this year after Washington

stepped up its campaign of “maximum pressure” against Tehran.

Ships have been attacked, drones downed and oil tankers seized since May, a year after the United States withdrew from a landmark nuclear deal between Iran and world powers and began reimposing biting sanctions against the country.

At the height of the crisis, US President Donald Trump called off air strikes against Iran at the last minute in June after the Islamic republic’s forces shot down a US drone. The seizure of the latest tanker would be the third by Iran in less than a month in Gulf waters—a conduit for much of the world’s crude oil.

On 18 July, the Guards said they had detained the Panama-flagged for MT Riah for alleged fuel smuggling. And a day later, they announced they had impounded the British-flagged Stena Impero in the Strait of Hormuz for breaking “international maritime rules”. —AFP ■



Iranian boats carrying commercial goods, mainly food ingredients, are shown docked at Ras al-Khor in Dubai early last month as tensions rose in Gulf waters. PHOTO: AFP

Growing panic in Kashmir as India, Pakistan bicker over border clashes

SRINAGAR (India)—Fears of an impending curfew in the disputed region of Kashmir ratcheted up tensions Sunday, as nuclear rivals India and Pakistan traded accusations of military clashes at the de facto border.

Kashmir has surged back into the spotlight in recent days, just months after a deadly militant attack on an Indian paramilitary convoy claimed by a Pakistan-based group sparked cross-border airstrikes.

The nuclear-armed rivals have controlled parts of the Himalayan region since the end of British colonial rule in the subcontinent in 1947.

The recent spate of tensions started last weekend after New Delhi deployed at least 10,000 troops, with media reports of a further 25,000 ordered to the region. The government has introduced other security measures — including a call to stock up food and fuel — over terror threat claims.

The measures have sparked growing panic among residents with long queues outside petrol stations, food stores and cash machines. Most petrol stations have reportedly run dry.

Authorities could impose an indefinite curfew on residents as early as Sunday night, a police official told AFP.

Locals said they saw large numbers of paramilitary personnel arriving at police stations and unloading sleeping bags outside government facilities. Meanwhile, India and Pakistan have traded tit-for-tat accusations of attacks across the Line of Control, the de facto border dividing Kashmir. The Indian army said Sunday it had foiled an attempt by a Pakistani team of army regulars and militants to cross the Line of Control, killing “five to seven” attackers.

Pakistan denied the claims, describing them as “baseless” as it accused India of using cluster bombs against civilians, killing two people — including a

four-year-old boy — and critically injuring 11 others. New Delhi has denied the charge. Pakistan’s Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday accused India of taking “new aggressive actions”, saying it could “blow up into a regional crisis”.

He called for a meeting of the country’s national security committee to review the situation in Kashmir.

Fear grips locals

Kashmir is a popular tourist destination for foreigners and Indians, who visit the picturesque valley in their tens of thousands every year.

But tourists and students have been scrambling to leave since the government said they should depart “immediately”, amid new intelligence about “terror threats” to a major Hindu pilgrimage in the region.

While the Indian military and the state government have highlighted the security risk, Kashmiri and opposition politicians in New Delhi are concerned the extra troops were deployed for other reasons.— AFP ■



The recent spate of tensions in Kashmir started last weekend after New Delhi deployed at least 10,000 troops. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tens of millions hit by Indonesia power blackout

JAKARTA (Indonesia)—Tens of millions of people on Indonesia’s heavily populated Java island were affected by a widespread electricity outage Sunday after the state utility PLN reported disruptions at several power plants.

The shutdown plunged buildings in the sprawling capital Jakarta -- home to some 30 million people -- into darkness and forced the temporary closure of its new mass rapid transit system.

Passengers were safely evacuated from several MRT carriages when the power went out, according to the system’s operator, while commuter trains were also affected.

Jakarta’s hospitals and Soekarno-Hatta International Airport were not affected because they have backup power generators, officials said.

“For people with sick relatives, all hospitals in Jakarta have power generators and are operating normally,” the city’s governor Anies Baswedan said on social media.

Jakarta’s top politician called for residents to reduce travel and conserve water until power is restored.

The blackout -- which began around noon local time (0500 GMT) and was expected to last until later Sunday -- caused sporadic disruptions in mobile phone services and cash machines, while some apartment buildings were left in the dark.

“The blackout has been going on for hours and it’s extremely hot in my apartment because the air conditioner is off,” said 30-year-old Jakarta resident Maya Larasati.

Outages also turned off some traffic lights, aggravating the capital’s notorious congestion.

PLN said the blackout was caused when a gas turbine at a major power plant went down and by a disruption at another facility. Both are on the western end of Java.

“We’re doing our best to fix the system so the power comes back to normal,” it added.—AFP ■

9 soldiers injured in southern Philippine clashes

MANILA—Nine members of the elite Philippine Scout Rangers have been wounded in clashes with Abu Sayyaf terrorists in the remote boondocks of Sulu province in the southern Philippines, the military said on Sunday.

The military said clashes broke out around 8:25 a.m. on Saturday in the mountain village of Lagsan near the boundaries of the towns of Maimbung and Parang. According to the military, the initial fighting broke out while troops were on combat operation. Up to 15 members of the Abu Sayyaf fighters reportedly fired on the troops, triggering a 15-minute firefight. The terrorists reportedly fled the scene.

However, more fighting ensued as another group of soldiers blocked the fleeing terrorists, the military said. The military claimed “an undetermined number” of Abu Sayyaf fighters were also wounded in the clashes.—Xinhua ■

4 students drown in east China

JINAN (Xinhua)—Four students have drowned in east China’s Shandong Province, authorities said.

The students from a middle school in Linyi city went swimming in a local river on Saturday afternoon and subsequently drowned, according to the local government.

The bodies of three of the victims were retrieved on Saturday night, and the other was retrieved on Sunday, the government said.—Xinhua ■

Invitation for Bids

Date: 5th August 2019
Loan Agreement No: MY-P26 dated 29th March, 2018
IFB No: IFB-MR/BD/2107

1. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) towards the cost of the Yangon Mandalay Railway Improvement Project Phase II. The Bid is invited by Myanma Railways as follows:

Invitation for Bid	Description: Procurement of FD Clips and Concrete Sleeper's Moulds	Issuing Date	Closing Date & Time	Non-refundable Document Fee
IFB No: IFB-MR/BD/2107	(1) Supply of 673,500 units of PANDOROL FD Clips (2) Design, manufacture and supply of the Concrete Sleeper's Moulds as follows: (i) 470 sets of the Concrete Sleeper's Moulds for FD Clip Sleeper	5 th August, 2019	18 th September, 2019 At 2:00 pm	USD 1,000

2. Bidding will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable Guidelines for Procurement under Japanese ODA Loans, and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries, as defined in the Loan Agreement.
(a) The Eligible Nationality of the Contractor(s) shall be Japan in case of the prime Contractor.
(b) In case where the prime Contractor is a joint venture, such joint venture will be eligible provided that the nationality of the lead partner is Japan, that the nationality of the other partners is Japan and/or the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and that the total share of work of Japanese partners in the joint venture is more than fifty percent (50%) of the contract amount.

3. The Myanma Railways, Ministry of Transport and Communications now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for design, manufacture, supply, installation, delivery, testing and commissioning of FD Clips and Concrete Sleeper's Moulds as described above ("Procurement of Goods"). International Competitive Bidding will be conducted in accordance with JICA's Single-Stage (One Envelope) Bidding Procedure.

4. A complete set of the Bidding Documents may be purchased and inspected by interested Bidders upon submission of a written application to the address below during office hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m on Monday to Friday (except public holidays of Myanmar).

5. Bids must be submitted to the address below or before 2:00 pm on 18th September, 2019 and must be accompanied by a Bid security of Japanese Yen forty-four million (44,000,000 JPY).

Managing Director,
Myanma Railways, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Nay Pyi Taw Railway Station Compound, Pobba Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
Telephone: +95-67 77024, Facsimile number: +95-67-677164
Email address: dgmplan.rail@mrt.gov.mm, dgm.planning.mr@gmail.com (not for submission but for clarification)

Japan, China, S. Korea arranging to hold 3-way summit in December

TOKYO—Japan, China and South Korea are arranging to hold their annual three-way summit in December, diplomatic sources said Sunday.

Relations between Japan and South Korea, however, have recently been getting worse due to historical and trade issues, and depending on the course of the conflict, the scheduling of the trilateral summit may be put in limbo.

China, which this year holds the rotating chair of the trilateral framework,



Combined file photo shows (from L) Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Chinese President Xi Jinping and South Korean President Moon Jae In. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

had hoped to organize the leaders' meeting much earlier following the summit of Group of 20 leading economies in Osaka in late

June, the sources said.

But Japan told China that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's schedule would be tight because of other

political events, including a summit of the Group of Seven major industrialized nations in France in late August, the sources said.

China now proposes that the trilateral summit be held in December and South Korea has already agreed to adjust President Moon Jae In's schedule to that end, they said.

The foreign ministers of the three Asian countries may meet on the outskirts of Beijing on 21 August to coordinate the schedule for the summit, to be chaired by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, as well as major agenda items.

The three countries last held their summit in May 2018 in Tokyo.

For Abe, the summit will serve as a good opportunity for him to create a more favorable environment for a planned trip to Japan next spring by Chinese President Xi Jinping as a state guest.

It is almost certain that Abe will hold separate talks with Li on the sidelines of the summit to discuss the trip by Xi.

But it remains uncertain at this point if Abe and Moon will meet bilaterally, even if the summit takes place as planned.—Kyodo News ■

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY. NO. (646 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY. NO. (646 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5-8-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P 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 SILKAGO LOGISTICS
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (012W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (012W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5-8-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P/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 NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIM'S DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC HALONG VOY. NO. (927S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC HALONG VOY. NO. (927S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5-8-2019 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P 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

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Amazing mural painting in temples of Sarle Village

By **Thiha**
(the Traveller)

THERE were many places in our country that were depicted as Little Bagan or Second Bagan. But temples in Sarle Village where I'd been were very much like the temples in Bagan. For those who had been to Bagan, who are interested in mural painting and who love ancient cultures, temples in Sarle Village will be treasures of immense value.

Sarle Village

I get to know Sarle Village from "Record of ancient buildings in Myingun, Kyundaw and Salay region" published by Ministry of Culture and articles written by Saya Yanaung (Dwe). According to locals it is a region where there were many blacksmith works and indeed there were many evidence of it. Many iron works and swords were made here in such abundance that the products of blacksmiths could even be traded with salts. Exchanging (le in Myanmar) salt (sar in Myanmar) with sword (dar in Myanmar) in Myanmar language was "Sar Dar Le" which gradually changes to Sarle Village. When I was there Sarle Village was quite a big village. With roads in the village constructed systematically it was quite a pleasant place and I wish that it could become a place for Community Based Tourism (CBT).

Bagan near Sarle Village that wasn't Bagan

Sarle Village wasn't much far from Ayeyawady River. Right at the entrance of the village were three Bagan type temples. From there on there were clusters of ancient pagodas and temples. It seems to have been neglected for a considerable time in the past and there were pagoda robbers who dug for enshrined valuables from the Buddha images and dais on which the images were placed. Just like the grave robbers of ancient Egypt pyramids who dug out valuable ancient relics. As such most of the Buddha images and the dais were being repaired.

But it was a great pleasure to see mural paintings in most of the temples and pagodas remains just as it was painted on in the ancient time. The temples and pagodas here were considered to be constructed about a century after the Bagan pagodas and temples were built so it all must have been constructed





Ancient Buddha Statue. PHOTO:THIHA



Ancient artwork. PHOTO:THIHA

around 12th to 13th century. The pagodas and temples were in a cluster of three or four located on small hills.

I was trekking from one cluster to another viewing and observing it one by one. There were some pagodas or temples that are two tiers or two story and with cave like inside. There were some that can be ascended or entered while some had a strong smell of bats inside that prevent one from ascending or entering it. I entered and ascended one. Only when I was on top that I realize how close I was to Ayeyawady River. I can also see farmlands dotted with clusters of ancient pagodas and temples too.

Ko Myint Swe who was a Sarle villager as well as a staff of archaeology research department said that there were about 40 pagodas and temples there. It was nice to see that there were archaeology research department personnel in all the pagodas and temples to preserve and protect the ancient buildings and mural paintings. Entries and exist at the pagodas and temples with doors that were kept locked when no one was around.

As most pagodas and temples were of similar design, I visited only about 15.

How to go there?

Sarle Village can be reached via Chauak and Salay



town. I took a road from Salay town to Shinpin Sa Kyo Pagoda that was an asphalt covered paved road. The road was just about two-lane wide and a bit narrow but there wasn't much car traffic. However, be careful of motorcycles just as on any rural roads. Once in awhile you may encounter an ox or cattle drawn farm cart. After the pagoda the road became a narrower earth and rock road so the going is a bit time consuming from there on even though the distance wasn't very far. Some rains cause the road to become a bit muddy making the short trip harder and longer. During summer,

the road could be dusty so be prepared for this too if you are going there in summer.

The road from Yenangyaung was said to be shorter taking you through the Yenangyaung Industrial Zone.

Why visit Sarle Village?

The main reasons to visit Salay Village are

- A place where Bagan-like pagodas and temples can be seen
- The pagodas and temples there were just about the same age as Bagan but had more mural paintings remaining just as it was first painted

- More cement art-works also remain just as it was first made

The visit to Sarle Village during my trip to central Myanmar was a very satisfactory one. I was able to observe our ancient art works and historical relics. It was also thanks to Ko Tun and Ma Khaing of Salay House, writer and guide Saya U Latt as well as Ko Myint Swe from archaeology research department who helped in any possible way toward making my trip to Salay Village a pleasant and informative one.

Lethwei World Cham- pionship IV to be held in Yangon this month

THE Myanmar Lethwei World Championship IV will be held on 18 August at the Theinphyu Lethwei Stadium in Yangon to showcase and preserve the sport, according to the Myanmar Lethwei's official page.

The event will be the fourth such contest to be held in Myanmar.

It will feature a variety of bouts in both men's and women's events, pitting Myanmar Lethwei fighters against Japanese and other foreign martial artists from Thailand, New Zealand, Russia, Iran, and Brazil. The bouts will be fought in the style of traditional Myanmar Lethwei, including its various clinching techniques.

In the 80-kg men's event, Myanmar Lethwei star Tun Tun Min will fight against Mikhail Vetrila (Russia).

In the 61-kg men's event, Ye Thway Ni (Myanmar) will take on Babak (Iran); the 67-kg men's event will feature Yan Naing Tun (Myanmar) versus Kayne Conlan (New Zealand); and, the 63-kg men's event will have Too Too (Myanmar) taking on Fabio Ferrari (Brazil).

In the 60-kg women's event, Vo Ro Ni Ka (Myanmar) will take on Saw Sing Sor Sopit (Thailand).

All the fights will be bare-knuckled, played without gloves, with only tape and gauze allowed on the hands of the fighters, said an official.

The Lethwei championship will start at 2 pm Myanmar Standard Time on 18 August. — Lynn Thit (Tgi)



The Myanmar team (red) hits the ball towards the Sri Lankan team during the Group A match of the U-23 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

U-23 Asian Volleyball Championship 2019 underway in Nay Pyi Taw

THE SMM 3rd U-23 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship, an Asian-level competition, is currently being held at indoor stadiums B and D of the Wunna Theikdi Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw.

This year, a total of 16 teams competing are in the championship.

Matches held yesterday at Stadium B featured Pakistan vs Bahrain, Myanmar vs Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei vs Qatar, and Thailand vs China.

Meanwhile, matches held in Stadium D featured Viet Nam vs Kyrgyzstan, India vs New Zealand, Japan vs Saudi Arabia, and

Hong Kong vs Australia.

Myanmar, the host of the tournament, has been placed with Sri Lanka, Australia, and Hong Kong in Group A, according to the results of the draw. Japan, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, and Viet Nam are in Group B; Chinese Taipei, Pakistan, Qatar,

and Bahrain are in Group C; and, Thailand, China, India, and New Zealand are in Group D.

The tourney will conclude on 11 August, and volleyball fans and interested people have been invited to see the matches, free of charge, said officials. — MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Myanmar team leaves for Viet Nam for AFF U-18 Championship 2019

THE Myanmar U-18 team left for Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam yesterday for competing in the ASEAN Football Federation's U-18 Championship 2019.

The team was accompanied by members of the coaching team led by U Soe Myat Min.

A total of 23 selected players from the Myanmar U-18 team

underwent special training in Myanmar last week in Yangon for the championship, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

The championship will take place from 6 to 19 August in Ho Chi Minh City. All Myanmar matches will take place at Binh Duong Stadium in Ho Chi Minh City.

Myanmar has been placed in Group A with Indonesia, Laos, Timor Leste, the Philippines, and Brunei.

Meanwhile, host Viet Nam team has been placed in Group B with Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Cambodia.

Myanmar will play their first match against Laos on 6 August at 3.30 p.m. Myanmar Standard Time.

Thereafter, Myanmar will take on the Philippines on 8 August, Timor-Leste on 10 August, Brunei on 12 August, and Indonesia on 14 August. — Lynn Thit (Tgi)



The Myanmar U-18 football team pose for a group photo with their coaches at the Yangon International Airport ahead of the AFF U-18 Championship 2019 in Viet Nam. **PHOTO: MFF**