

Opening ceremony of 7th ASEAN Para Games in Nay Pyi Taw

Nay Pyi Taw, 14 Jan— An opening ceremony of the 7th ASEAN Para Games hosted in Myanmar for the first time took place at Wunna Theikdi Stadium, here, this evening.

Myanmar will hold this sporting extravaganza after holding the 27th SEA Games in a great success three weeks ago.

With the aim of fostering friendship, equality and unity among the ASEAN countries, the regional sporting event is held biennially in order to promote friendship and solidarity among the citizens of the countries in the region, show equality in sports, highlight the policy of peaceful coexistence among the Southeast Asian nations and present the sporting spirit and quality and dignity of the region.

Before the opening ceremony to be held under 15 agendas, vocalists entertained audiences with songs.

Together with officials, managers, coaches and athletes, spectators, media persons, LOs and VOs and work force, experts and guests totaling 20000, President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win, Vice- President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and wife Daw Nann Shwe Hmon, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint, Commander-in- Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union, the Chairman of the Union Election Commission, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, the Union ministers, members of the leading committee for organizing the games attended the ceremony.

Before 10 digits LED countdown and firework displays, over 1200 students in black suit made performances with the use of torchlight and fireworks. Moreover, Myanmar traditional musical performances were also presented at the opening ceremony.

Next, the flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was hoisted followed by the flag-raising of ASEAN Para Sports Federation and 7th ASEAN Para Games. Then, athletes from participating countries to the games took their designated places.

A total of 1482 athletes from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and host Myanmar will take part in the competitions.

Chairman of the leading committee for holding the 7th ASEAN Para Games Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan gave an account of the games.

On behalf of the President, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham made an opening address. The Vice-President said sporting facilities and venues and accommodation are ready for convenience of all athletes and guests. Those who come to the games will see real situation in Myanmar and kind hospitality of its people. He stressed the need to take part in the competitions in accord with the motto of the Games “Friendship, Equality, Unity”. He called

on media to present the brilliant performances of the disabled athletes to the world. Later, he announced the opening of the 7th ASEAN Para Games.

Next, the President of ASEAN Para Sports Federation spoke on the occasion. Then Athletes'/Judges' Oaths were spoken by an athlete and a judge.

Afterwards, a torch relay of former medal-winning disabled athletes and torchlighting ceremony followed.

Next, music and dance performances depicting long-lasting beauty and perpetuation of the Union were presented. The Games will be held till 20 January. A total of 339 gold, 339 silver and 359 bronze will be presented to winners in Archery, Athletics, Boccia, Blindfold Chess, Football 7-A-Side, Football 5-A-Side, Goal Ball, Power Lifting, Swimming, Table Tennis, Volleyball Sitting and Wheelchair Basketball competitions.—MNA
