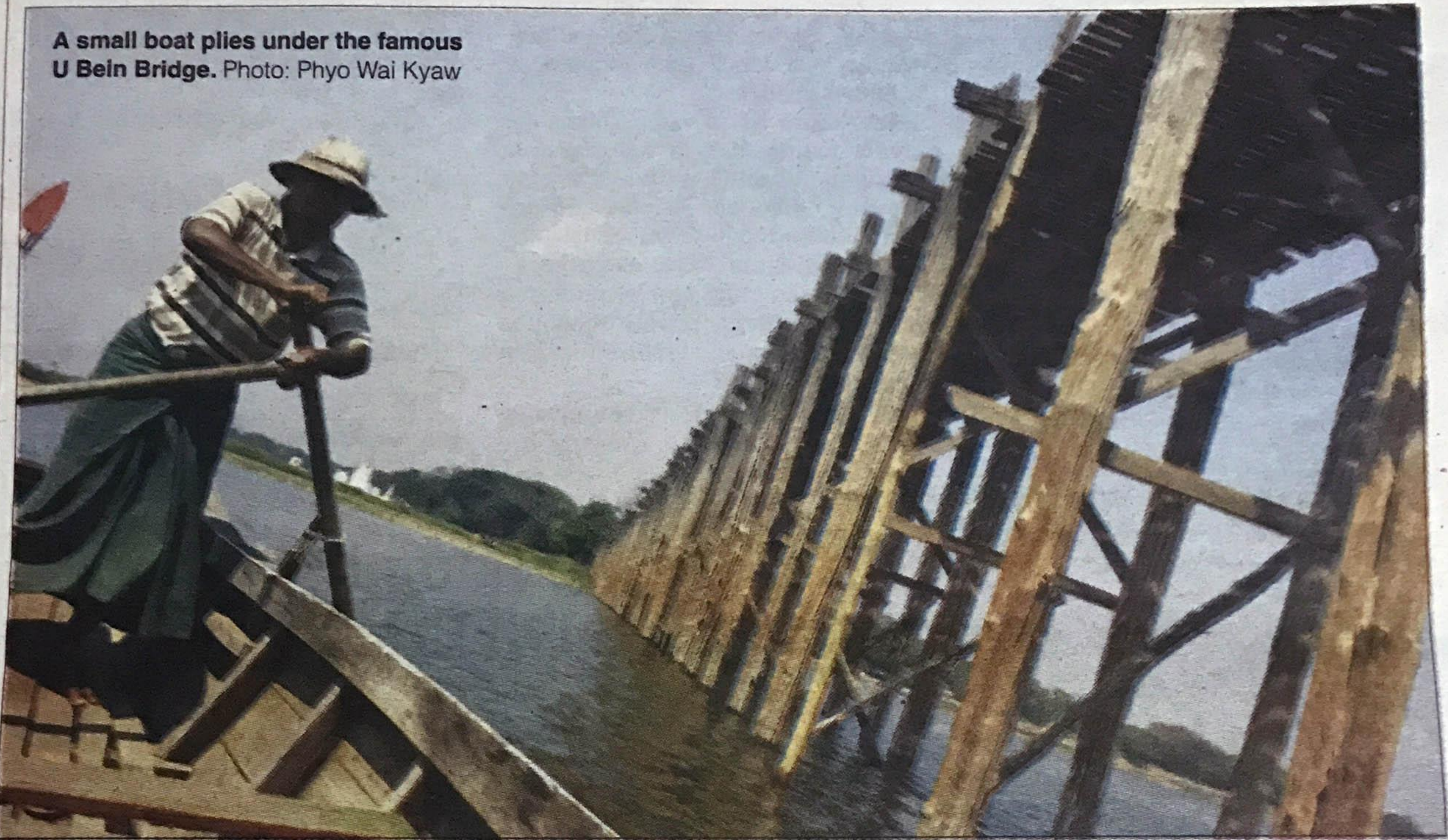


A small boat plies under the famous U Bein Bridge. Photo: Phyo Wai Kyaw



U Bein Bridge to be repaired within 3 years

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THE U Bein Bridge, located in the Amrapura township of Mandalay will be repaired in the space of 3 years without damaging its original structure.

Dr Zarchi Min, professor and project leader from Mandalay Technological University, said that research and studies had been conducted with experts from Germany on how to repair the famous but rapidly deteriorating bridge.

A five-day workshop on the U Bein Bridge was held at the Mandalay City Development Committee office which started on May 8. One of the experts included Project Manager Karl Klelneberg from TH Georg Agricola Bochum University in Germany. The outcome of the workshop was reported to the regional minister and mayor on May 12.

"We have planned to repair parts

of U Bein Bridge which need to be restored by setting a three year target from 2018. We plan to perform the restoration processes from January to May [five months] yearly in order to avoid the rainy season," she said on May 12.

According to the current findings, the concrete pillars are weak and have even less strength than the 'original long-existing teak pillars.

"We have a framework to restore it back to its original. We will perform in line with that framework. The main requirement of the process is teak wood and workers. We will make a submission to the authorities on how they can support us," said Dr Zarchi Min.

Studies have been made since 2015 for conserving the bridge and a project proposal was sent to the German ministry of foreign affairs in Berlin in 2016. She added that 50,000 euro grant has been received.

"Getting teak and expert work-

ers are important. We cannot begin this project next year without getting them. We have technology and experts now," Dr Zarchi Min said.

Mandalay Mayor Dr Ye Lwin said that the previous bridge conservation work had technological weaknesses. He said they would report to the regional government for funding.

U Bein Bridge was repaired at a cost of more than K13 million in 2014. The Myanmar Teakwood Company also provided teak for the restoration. Because of the 2014 heavy rain, the water had risen to the bridge floor and some logs had floated onto the water. Teak wood pillars were replaced with concrete pillars and the original style was lost.

U Bein Bridge was built by U Bein in 1211 Myanmar Era and features more than 1000 teak wood pillars. It measures 7.8 furlongs.

- Translation by Win Thaw Tar and Khine Thazin Han